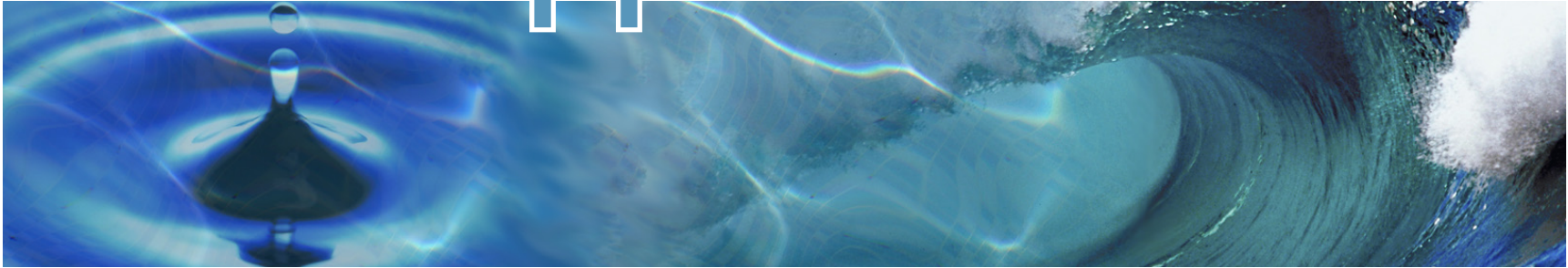


From Ripples to Waves



The Rural Community College Initiative to Build New Partnerships in Support of America's Rural Communities

A Report by the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development,
with substantial support from the Ford Foundation.

Prepared by Mary Emery
With assistance from Cornelia Flora, Susan Fey, Kristi Hetland and Pam Cooper

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January 2008

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We also appreciate the support from the National Rural Funders Collaborative to aid us in extending the RCCI opportunities to Native-serving colleges, and Jim Richardson's thought provoking questions.

Our collaboration with our sister center, the Southern Rural Development Center, helped us identify resources and provide quality learning experiences for our college partners.

This project could not have been possible without the active participation of our land-grant partners, including the College of Education at New Mexico State University and Cooperative Extension in Hawaii, Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska and North Dakota.



Preface

“In reality, rural America is at a Dickensian crossroads—best of times for many rural communities; worst of times for many others...

The difference between the two rural realities is often the result of circumstances over which rural areas have little control—proximity to thriving urban centers, inclusion of historic and natural landmarks and attractions to make them successful tourist destinations, unique microclimates with unspoiled vast open spaces to make them attractive as second and summer/winter homes for those with the means to choose where they live when. But these rural places stand in stark contrast to rural areas where poverty, race and class overlap and are concentrated...

Rural places and populations that historically have seen persistent poverty and disinvestment need not accept this as a matter of dumb fate, but can find themselves in the column of vibrant and hopeful communities along with those finding themselves in the path of urban sprawl, scenic tourism and retirement/vacation development. To do so, however, requires that these historically poor and disinvested communities take stock of their assets or sources of capital¹ as Cornelia Flora is right to point out, and then assess what they can build or rebuild using those assets as the cornerstone for a new economic future. But building on community assets, however necessary, is insufficient to help these places where hope has often been abandoned.

These communities must also rely on community institutions and infrastructure that can provide the technical, as well as the financial, tools with which these native assets can be harnessed as the

¹ Flora, Flora and Fey, 2004.

essential elements of rural transformation. In addition to the obvious role of financial institutions—banks, credit unions, community development financial institutions, micro enterprises—in bringing about rural transformation, at least two other types of institutions within rural communities are also critical—health prevention/health care institutions and institutions of higher education. With respect to higher education, those essential institutions are typically universities and community colleges.

The difference between those institutions serving rural areas that are transformative, versus those that are merely sustaining, is that the former do, whereas the latter do not, hold “relevance to contemporary community issues, crises and opportunities” as a critical, if not the critical test, of their success... Community colleges—often looked down upon as the pariahs of higher education—have in many cases increasingly sought to make themselves relevant to the communities they serve—not merely as a matter of self-preservation, but more importantly as a matter of social responsibility and fulfillment of their mission...

The Rural Community College Initiative, thanks to the support of the Ford Foundation, Lumina Foundation, USDA and others, is reinforcing what community and tribal colleges instinctively know—their mission and success lies not simply, or even primarily, in providing an alternative educational path for high school graduates and returning adult learners who choose not to attend a university. Their success lies also, and perhaps more importantly, in building the intellectual capital that will continue to help rural communities prosper as well as to support the innovation and cultural relevancy on which the current rural renaissance is ultimately grounded. The community/tribal college classroom is not found on the often compact, meagerly-furnished campuses they occupy, but in the community itself.

*Jim Richardson, Executive Director
National Rural Funders Collaborative
2006*



Partners

Community, Tribal and Native-serving Colleges

- Eastern New Mexico University–Roswell
- Eastern New Mexico University–Ruidoso
- Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College
- Fort Berthold Community College
- Hawaii Community College
- Little Priest Tribal College
- Mesalands Community College
- Mid-Plains Community College
- Northeast Higher Education District
- Rochester Community and Technical College
- Turtle Mountain Community College
- United Tribes Technical College
- University of Alaska–Bristol Bay Campus, Dillingham
- Williston State College

Coaching Partners

- Iowa State University Cooperative Extension
- New Mexico State University College of Education
- North Dakota State University Cooperative Extension
- University of Minnesota Cooperative Extension
- University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension



Executive Summary

In 1994 the Ford Foundation launched the Rural Community College Initiative as a “national demonstration project to help community colleges in distressed regions move their people and communities toward prosperity. It challenged community colleges to become catalysts for economic development and supported aggressive efforts to increase access to education in rural communities” (MDC 2001). In 2002 Ford invested in an experiment to scale down the financial resources for the RCCI program, but not the expectations of success, and to look at ways of institutionalizing the RCCI process. In this report, we describe the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development’s results of this experiment by identifying the program activities and analyzing the impact of RCCI on colleges and their communities. We also look at the colleges’ progress toward a sustainable model of community engagement and future prospects for RCCI.

If we think of RCCI as a pebble—a small amount of funding, access to coaching, and connection to the resources of the Regional Rural Development Centers and their partners—then the questions we seek to answer are:

- To what extent did dropping that pebble into the community college environment create ripples of change?
- How sustainable are those changes?
- Where the RCCI was successful in leveraging transformational change, what processes were used to leverage \$15,000, coaching and connections into that degree of change?

- What can we learn from this process that can improve funding practices and results?
- What factors contributed to widespread ripples becoming waves in some locations while in other environments the pebble created minimal ripples and no waves of change?

In order to answer these questions about the impact of RCCI and the robustness of the model, we used Appreciative Inquiry to craft interview questions and focus group discussions, and the Community Capitals Framework (CCF) to engage college teams, or in some cases team leaders, in a reflection exercise on the impact of RCCI on the college and community or communities it serves.

As one President commented, “It is hard to see where RCCI begins and ends because so many things are networked together.”

Indeed, in some instances the successes would likely have occurred without RCCI; however, respondents indicated that RCCI helped to make things happen faster and with better planning and support. Examples of these college/community impact maps are included in the report, as are tables and diagrams describing the web of interactions and the resulting impacts.

The North Central Regional Center for Rural Development (NCRCD) worked with a total of 15 colleges. Three of these colleges dropped out without completing the process. The

RCCI had a tremendous impact in eight colleges, and all of the colleges who stayed with the program experienced some degree of change. Turnover in team leaders, college leadership, and/or coaches occurred in every college except two, impacting RCCI efforts in different ways.

The Hawaii Community College experienced such major changes in staff that we completed the community-based planning with them by working with former staff and the coach. Similarly, the RCCI process had a transformational impact on the town of Tucumcari, New Mexico, home of Mesalands Community College, which also started two new programs. United Tribes Technical College chose to participate by supporting RCCI efforts at Fort Berthold Community College. Although they did not undertake a planning process, RCCI participation at UTTC contributed to a \$200,000 EDA technical assistance/training grant and supported the development of a curriculum for tribal planners. The RCCI point person at UTTC indicated that RCCI contributed to more successful partnering with their sister colleges and more collaboration to strengthen programs and program delivery. She also reported that training and research related to curriculum development were very useful. She sees the college as experiencing a second level of change around new programs and partners.

For the eight colleges where the RCCI project was a catalyst for transformational change, six reported that participation led to more than \$1 million in additional investment into the college and/or community, the development of new instructional programs, and the development of new community partnerships. Despite these accomplishments, when we asked what they thought was the Most Significant Change (Dart and

Davies, 2003) resulting from the RCCI, they described changes in community attitudes, particularly in regard to identifying and using local and regional assets, taking pride in the community, understanding they can and must take responsibility for the community's future, and understanding how young people play a critical role in a community's future as the most significant changes in their community or communities.

Clearly, the Ford investment, coupled with the resources and linkages of the Regional Rural Development Centers and support from land-grant based coaches, created a unique opportunity to support innovation and change in rural community colleges and the communities they serve. Phase two of the RCCI allowed the Regional Rural Development Centers to adapt the model developed by MDC to the needs of the colleges and the communities with whom we worked. Colleges reported great value in the training, site visits, connections to the Centers and their partners, and coaching; most did not, however, choose to use the step-by-step Vision to Action Process central to the MDC approach. Thus, college teams and their coaches engaged in systemic, rather than systematic, approaches to community engagement and planning (Norum, 2000).

When we asked our partners to help us understand what contributed to a successful RCCI process, we learned that having a small amount of seed money with few strings attached, taking people out of their own setting for training and site visits, accountable but decentralized resources, and the national credibility the RCCI brought to the campus helped make the RCCI a success for them.

Other factors contributing to local/regional success include:

- A strategy to engage the people and their organizations and institutions in identifying assets.
- Developing a picture of what reversing the spiral of rural decline will look like.
- Connecting people's passion for their place to action.
- Creating new collaborations designed to share resources and expertise in order to create that new future.
- Limited, but critical, funding to seed the strategies that come from the engagement process.
- Coaching to build capacity and support transformational change.
- Linking to resources and expertise via the Regional Rural Development Centers and their partners.

Thus, the RCCI pebble dropped into relatively stable environments created strong ripples, often interacting with other ripples of change to create a wave of transformational change leading to a new vision of the future for the colleges and the communities they serve. Dropped into turbulent waters created by staff changes and fragile funding, the RCCI pebble created more isolated changes, but not necessarily less sustainable waves of change.



INTRODUCTION

If we think of the RCCI as a pebble—a small amount of funding, access to coaching and connection to the resources of the Regional Rural Development Centers and their partners—then the questions we seek to answer are:

- To what extent did dropping that pebble into the community college environment create ripples of change?
- How sustainable are those changes?
- Where the RCCI was successful in leveraging transformational change, what processes were used to leverage \$15,000, coaching and connections into that degree of change?
- What can we learn from this process that can improve funding practices and results?
- What factors contributed to widespread ripples becoming waves in some locations while in other environments the pebble create minimal ripples and no waves of change?

In 2002 the Ford Foundation invested in an experiment to scale down the resources for the Rural Community College Initiative program and to look at ways of institutionalizing the RCCI process. In this report we describe the results of this experiment by identifying the program activities, the impact of the program on colleges and their communities, and the colleges' progress toward a sustainable model. The North Central Regional Center for Rural Development worked with a total of 15 colleges.

College participation underwritten by the National Rural Funders Collaborative (NRFC) included the University of Alaska Northwest Campus in Nome, Alaska (which was replaced by

the Bristol Bay Campus in Dillingham), the Hawaii Community College, and Turtle Mountain Community College in Belcourt, North Dakota, on the Turtle Mountain Reservation.

The eight colleges selected in phase one of the project were Eastern New Mexico University—Roswell, Eastern New Mexico University—Ruidoso, Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College in Minnesota (which is now being split into two colleges, sharing the same physical plant), Mesalands Community College (New Mexico), the Northeast Higher Education District (Minnesota), Rochester Community and Technical College (Minnesota), United Tribes Technical College (North Dakota), and Williston State College (North Dakota).

The seven colleges added in the second phase were Fort Berthold Community College on the Fort Berthold Reservations (NE), Hawaii Community College, Little Priest Tribal College on the Winnebago Reservation (NE), Mid-Plains Community College (NE), Turtle Mountain Community College (ND), and two University of Alaska campuses, Northwest Campus in Nome and Bristol Bay Campus in Dillingham. Alaska did not complete the RCCI process because the resources we offered were not sufficient to address their planning needs.

Project progress toward goals is detailed in Section I, and in Section II we describe the methodologies used to complete our impact analysis, findings and conclusions. Section III includes detailed tables of asset development using the Community Capitals Framework (CCF), depictions of the ripple effect as an upward spiral of change, and a description of the colleges' RCCI activities.



SECTION I

Progress Toward Goals, 2004-2007

In this section, we look at the RCCI goals laid out in our proposal to the Ford Foundation. As is the case with many projects, achievements of some goals were met beyond our expectations, while in others progress was much more difficult to attain.

Goal One: *Continue to expand the network of rural community, Native-serving and tribal colleges actively engaged in the RCCI program.*

- Two colleges were added in Round 2: Mid-Plains Community College and Little Priest Tribal College. With additional funding from the National Rural Funders Collaborative, we initiated new RCCI-related work with Turtle Mountain Community College, Hawaii Community College, Fort Berthold Community College, and the University of Alaska–Northwest Campus, which dropped out and was replaced by Bristol Bay Campus. Bristol Bay Campus also dropped out due to funding and personnel changes.

Goal Two: *Increase the capacity of rural community and tribal colleges to be agents of innovation in their service areas, especially as it relates to sustainable economic development, educational access, and civic involvement strategies in distressed rural areas.*

- Activities under this goal included: identification and training of coaches, coaching activities for college teams, orientation of college teams and site visits, development of RCCI Institutes (Nashville 2004 and Fort Worth 2006), hosting an RCCI evaluation meeting, and a coaches' evaluation meeting.
- Preliminary data on outcomes indicate:

Mid-Plains Community College initiated advisory committees at outreach sites to increase educational access in rural and isolated communities, developed an entrepreneurship program in McCook, Nebraska, and initiated discussions on how the college can help retain and recruit young people in the region.

Fort Berthold Community College completed a strategic planning process that involved participation from people in all the districts on the reservation, and aided them in the accreditation process.

Turtle Mountain Community College completed a strategic planning process that was revisited under the new president and led to the creation of the Anishinaube Wellness Center.

United Tribes Technical College strengthened their relationship with tribal economic development planners, developed certification training for planners, increased networking among planners, and greatly enhanced planner work on reservations in North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming and Montana.

Williston State College developed a regional planning effort to address the boom and bust issues associated with energy, created an online entrepreneurship program, developed a relationship with the Trenton Indian Service Agency, and initiated a partnership among K-12 schools and postsecondary institutions to increase access to education in western North Dakota. They also plan to initiate a major community and economic development effort in conjunction with Dickinson, North Dakota, using funding support from the Bush Foundation.

Northeast Higher Education District developed two tech centers, increased programming in entrepreneurship, and expanded college involvement in community and economic development organizations.

Rochester Community and Technical College worked with the Workforce Investment Board to create a sub-committee on manufacturing and to host a regional summit. They also have expanded outreach to bedroom communities around Rochester, Minnesota, and increased services to their growing Latino community.

Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College conducted listening sessions on five reservations and used that information to expand and improve outreach offerings.

Mesalands Community College hosted study circles to increase civic involvement, develop pride in the community and foster a clean-up. They helped organize local artists, developed a non-profit to assist local artists, sought and received funding to refurbish the train station into an arts incubator, facilitated a successful application to participate in the state's Main Street program, began summer programs for youth in entrepreneurship and mural painting, wrote a successful grant for a construction skills program, and have shifted the local economic development strategy from the 20-plus year strategy of trying to attract an industry to their industrial park to building on local assets.

Eastern New Mexico University–Ruidoso focused their RCCI work on creating strong relationships at their outreach sites, resulting in a full-time position centered on outreach. They also hosted a regional summit, a noted accomplishment in an area where local governments have a long history of fighting with each other over water and other resources.

Eastern New Mexico University–Roswell concentrated on workforce issues by initially recruiting staff volunteers to tutor middle school students. This effort expanded to support after-school programs and a scholarship program. They also moved the Alternative School onto the campus, offering seamless curriculum in technical and professional fields, and created a learn-and-serve program in the occupational therapy assistance program. This program has increased the number of local kindergarten children testing at or above benchmark from 50% or less to 92%, with incredible implications for future

special education funding and the number of prison beds, which are predicted based on third grade reading scores.

Little Priest Tribal College is one place where the RCCI did not make much of a difference. During the three years we worked with LPTC, we saw five different presidencies and two team leaders quit. We believe that training provided by the RCCI on Appreciative Inquiry has led to a recognition program that has survived the changes in governance.

Goal Three: *Increase the ability of land-grant institutions to work in collaboration with rural community/tribal colleges in delivering effective programming in rural areas.*

- All of the **North Dakota** and **Minnesota** coaches report ongoing relationships with the colleges they coached and more sharing of resources. Little Priest Tribal College continues to have a relationship with Iowa State University, although not so much with the coach. The Mid-Plains Community College coaching arrangement did not work.

Goal Four: *Institutionalize the RCCI community/tribal college and land-grant university partnership as a catalyst for helping address the sustainable economic development, educational access and civic engagement challenges facing rural communities located in distressed, high poverty areas of America.*

- The **Rural Community College Alliance** has chosen to work with the Rural Policy and Research Institute (RUPRI) on soliciting funding for continuing RCCI-related work; the NCRCRD and SRDC have supported

RCCA and presented at its meetings. Given the funding climate, we are not optimistic about additional funding at this time.

- **United Tribes Technical College's** Vice President for Inter-Tribal Programs has joined the NCRCRD Board of Directors, and the college is participating in both regional and national Extension program leaders in community development groups.
- The **NCRCRD** has created a bridge between the First Americans Land-grant College and Organization Network (FALCON) and the Regional Rural Development Centers.

Additional activities we engaged in to support the goals include:

- RCCI Web site updates at the SRDC site.
- Quarterly RCCI Advisory Council teleconferences.
- Conference calls with coaches, team leaders and college presidents.
- Electronic listservs for information sharing.
- Monthly RCCI e-newsletter compiled by the NCRCRD.
- Bi-monthly grant and training opportunities newsletter sent out by the SRDC.
- Disbursement of occasional electronic policy and research briefs.



SECTION II

Evaluation Findings

When asked to help us understand what it was about the \$15,000 grant plus coaching that led to such transformational change, the focus groups gave these responses:

- Funding with no strings attached allowed us to seed projects and then go for additional funding.
- It provided money to take a gamble with.
- The RCCI focus on rural issues gave us national credibility.
- It provided accountable but decentralized resources—accountable for our decisions in terms of reflecting science-based knowledge and democratic-based decision-making.
- The RCCI took people out of their own setting to learn from one another.
- It provided site selection and orientation.

In addition to reporting progress toward goals, we also wanted to learn more about the RCCI process and what made it successful. We wanted to better understand the conditions under which the RCCI pebble created strong ripples, leading to interaction with other ripples to create a wave of change. If we think of the RCCI as a pebble—a small amount of funding, access to coaching and connection to the resources of the Regional Rural Development Centers and their partners—then the questions we seek to answer are:

- To what extent did dropping that pebble into the community college environment create ripples of sustainable change?
- How sustainable are those changes?
- What processes were used to leverage \$15,000, coaching and connections into more than \$1million of additional investment?
- What can we learn from this process that can improve funding practices and results?
- What factors contributed to widespread ripples becoming waves in some locations while in other environments the pebble created minimal ripples and no waves of change?

Methodology

In order to answer these questions about the impact of the RCCI and robustness of the model, we used Appreciative Inquiry to craft interview and focus group discussions, and the Community Capitals Framework (CCF) to engage college teams in a reflection exercise on the RCCI's impact on the college or community. As one president commented, "It is hard to see where the RCCI begins and ends because so many things are networked together." Indeed, in some instances the successes would likely have occurred without RCCI; however, respondents indicated that the RCCI helped to make things happen faster and with better planning and support.

In addition, we used the Community Capitals Framework to analyze the data collected in the focus groups. Examples of these college/community impact maps are included in the report, as are tables and diagrams describing the web of interactions and impact. We were unable to map impact at all the colleges. Wherever possible we included the coach in the impact mapping. In addition, we convened a small group of coaches to talk about the future of this role in Extension.

The Positive Core of the RCCI Process for Colleges

In Appreciative Inquiry, we seek to learn from successes and what factors contributed to that success to uncover the Positive Core of what works. When asked to help us understand **what it was about the \$15,000 support grant plus coaching that led to such transformational change**, the focus groups gave these responses:

- Funding, with no strings attached, allowed us to seed projects and then go for additional funding.

- It provided money to take a gamble with.
- The RCCI focus on rural issues gave us national credibility.
- It provided accountable but decentralized resources—accountable for our decisions in terms of reflecting science-based knowledge and democratic-based decision-making.
- The RCCI took people out of their own setting to learn from one another.
- It provided site selection and orientation.

Focus group participants helped us understand the **factors at the college that contributed to a successful RCCI experience**:

- Community-minded leaders who see themselves adding value to the community.
- It brought additional players, not connected to the college, to the table.
- It gave the college strength to take on these kinds of things.
- A president's willingness to focus on community and support creativity and innovation led to change.
- It gave people a reason to partner and to work together and thus formalized relationships.
- A key readiness factor was the existence of college leadership already connected to communities.

We also asked them to help us understand the **process that led to successful action**:

- We planned to change the whole community and realized we had to do it in baby steps.
- The RCCI brought more people to the table, generating community support to do these things.

- The RCCI provided a stimulus to get involved.
- The composition of the team was broad enough to include cities and counties and cross jurisdictional boundaries.
- The teams focused on things that made a difference and impact state funding.
- The RCCI opens doors and brokers partnerships.
- It provides an opportunity to pull together.
- The focus of RCCI has to be tolerance at all levels.
- Support for the team leader is critical.
- Access to relevant research, especially the Community Capitals Framework, and the newsletter were helpful.
- The process emphasized the value of risk-taking and reward and recognition.
- Vision-to-action planning provided a research framework to shape/frame our work and stay focused.
- It focused attention on our ruralness and facilitating rural development.
- It helped us see the importance of providing opportunities to children in poverty.
- It demonstrated the importance of developing public-private partnerships.
- The synergy of the core team was around being positive and progress-oriented.
- The RCCI helped people communicate new views of what is possible.
- “It’s about conversation and relationships.”
- It helped us to focus on the system versus on a project and thus helped install a system for how the college can help community development.
- It established a medium so people can align incentives and have a reason to come together.
- Communication and stable leadership—people who plan to stay and have the right incentives— are important.

- Shared directions, opportunities and actions are important. Shared direction creates readiness to be successfully opportunistic.

As a result of participating in the RCCI process we heard these comments about **why the process worked:**

- It helped make the connection to Extension. In Hawaii, Extension is not involved in economic development.
- It increased networking and the notion that we can come together and learn from one another.
- Some of the results are less tangible than jobs, businesses and students.
- Teams became aware of how change impacts the community and the college.
- We see a change in local/regional funders to start funding more strategically.
- It gives students spirit to come back and make a difference.
- It trains students to be citizens in this community.
- “We know how to go out and expand in other areas.”
- Several teams commented that they are closer to their congressional delegation, and some received an earmark. One person commented, “We know each other by name.”
- The community understands the importance of involving youth and recognizing their potential to support the community’s future.
- Economic development strategies shifted from attraction to “grow your own.”

While six of the colleges had little leadership turnover, all of the tribal and Native-serving colleges experienced significant turnover including three with multiple presidents. Despite these changes, these colleges were also able to mobilize existing

assets to leverage the \$15,000 and coaching into transformational change. Thus, we believe that the RCCI pebble can create ripples into waves even in some relatively turbulent waters.

Evaluation Results for Coaches

We asked a small group of coaches to help us understand how they felt coaching contributed to college success and how what they learned as RCCI coaches can influence future Extension work on community-based initiatives. As a result of the RCCI and related coaching work funded by the Northwest Area Foundation, the Minnesota Community Vitality Program has included coaching in some of their job descriptions. We also received additional funding from the NWA and the W. K. Kellogg Foundation to look at coaching for community change.

Tools the coaches found useful included:

- Appreciative inquiry
- Rapid rural appraisal
- Visioning process
- Planning “road maps”
- Sector wheel
- Mapping connections/network analysis.
- Introductory asset mapping exercises

What it takes to launch a new initiative. Describing what they view as critical elements for a successful launch and strategies for new community engagement, coaches listed:

- Attaining lift—positive first steps.
- Getting interested people at the table.
- Making time to build something sturdy.
- Locating, convincing the potential market.
- Developing a powerful vision.

As with the RCCI teams, we asked the coaches to help us identify the positive core of coaching for community change:

- Builds trust and confidence.
- Encourages risk-taking and initiative and recognizes know-how.
- Builds reflective practice and proactive evaluation.
- Helps the group open up to discover new possibilities.
- Encourages patience and commitment to let new things “bubble up.”
- Creates holding space for deeper dialogue around hard issues.
- Understands that metrics/measures are non-negotiable. They must come from the people and what they want to know.
- Coaches are neutral in that they cannot be part of the power struggle, but they are not neutral around issues of inclusion and participation.
- Encourages groups to celebrate success—drumming and dancing.
- Understands the power of silence.
- Balances what they know with not giving answers so that they do not steal the learning.
- Supports setting ground rules.
- Takes time for relationships.
- Sees failure/floundering as success—badge of honor—opportunity for learning for all.
- Reflects back to the group to help them see and celebrate progress.
- Helps establish ground rules; frame the relationship in advance; negotiate with funders and institutions.
- Reinforces the importance of respect, especially around differences.
- Works toward transformational learning.

What RCCI Coaches Did

- Listened, sought to surface “red flags”.
- Observed and reflected back on group dynamics.
- Reframed how they were looking at the issue.
- Shared examples of change processes.
- Spent time with team members.
- Identified learning agendas.
- Identified other resources that they could tap into.
- Guided teams so they connected to others.
- Looked to bring out the skills that people have.
- Helped teams narrow and intensely focus their work on change goals.
- Provided guided questions: What is achievable? Where is your expertise?
- Built relationships with the leadership group.
- Found an open, honorable way for participants to share their expertise.
- Encouraged clear collaborative ground rules (permission, style, intention, experience).
- Helped teams consider all the little details that convey positive intent to community and participation.
- Encouraged intercultural development assessment, network mapping, conflict styles assessment.
- Looked for ways to describe work change using metaphor.
- Helped teams consider all the little details that convey positive intent to community and participation.
- Provided “cheerleading.”
- Developed trust and roles as outsiders.
- Created inclusive environments.

The majority of our coaches came from the Cooperative Extension system and many had decades of experience in community development work, including using coaching as a tool to support community capacity building. What was new for them was the intentional linking of coaching to other project activities as a way to add value to those activities. As a result of the RCCI and the Northwest Area Foundation's experiences with coaching as part of an overall strategy, Extension services are looking for new ways of packaging programming that includes coaching as a way to support capacity building and strategic initiatives.

What makes coaching work?

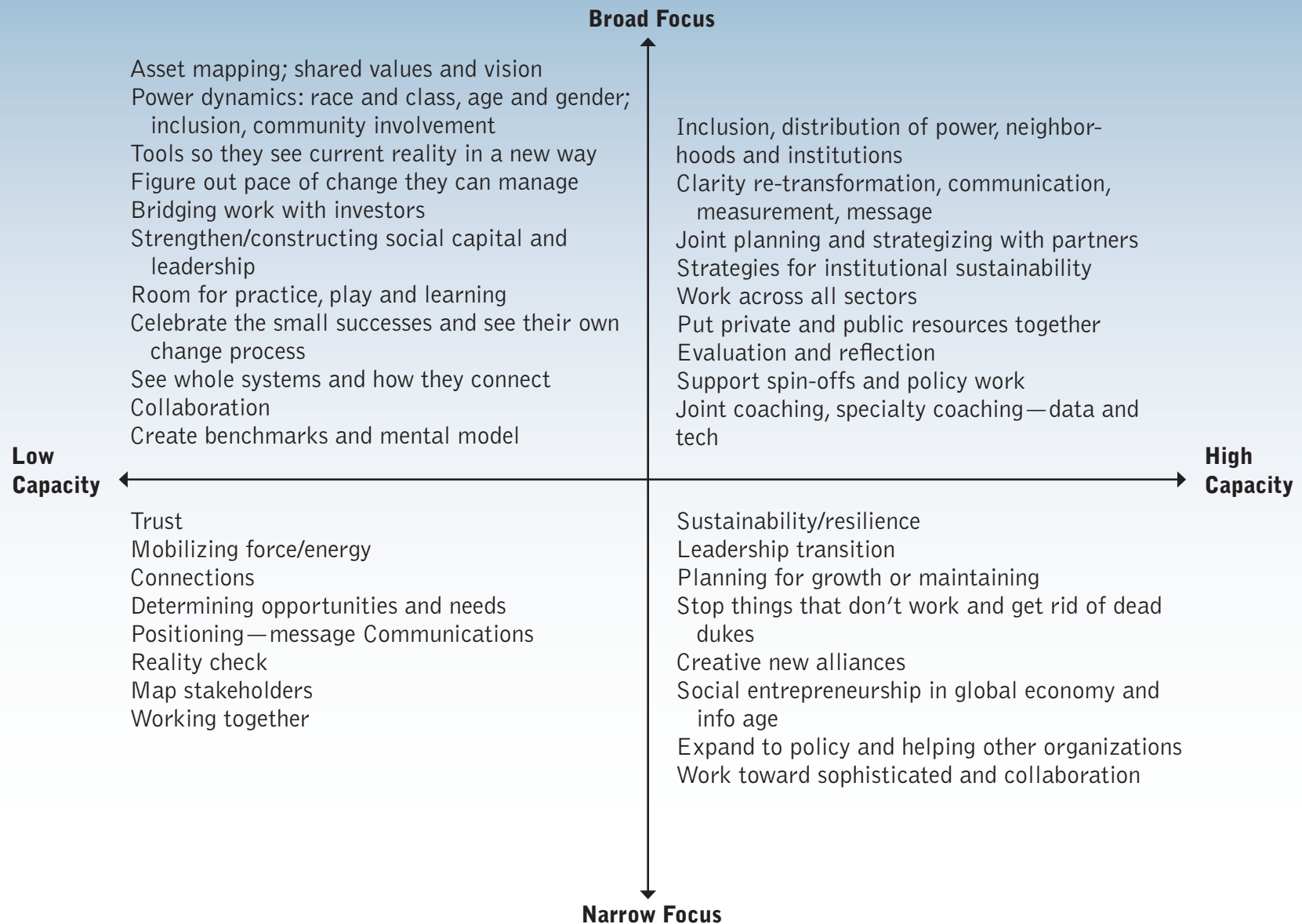
- "Balancing what we know with not giving information so that we do not steal the learning."
- Taking time for relationships.
- Encouraging patience and commitment to let new things "bubble up."
- Drumming and dancing.
- Acknowledging the power of silence.
- Having skin in the game!
- Not to them! Not for them! With them!

Summary

The two Regional Rural Development Centers inherited a process and a project from the first phase of the RCCI. MDC had piloted the combination of training, coaching, site visits and a step-by-step planning process to create the RCCI brand. As part of the transition process they helped Center staff understand the process and the tools, and they assisted with the first RCCI Institute and coaches training. Our challenge, then, was to take this approach, the tools, and the process and adapt them to the region we serve. In doing so, we saw the value of training that brings people together to learn from one another. Yet this aspect, along with the site visitations, had less impact on the colleges experiencing high levels of staff turnover, as might be expected.

Because we did not find a keen interest among our college partners to follow the Vision-to-Action approach, we did not make that a requirement. RCCI participants identified the ability to engage the community and use planning processes in diverse ways as key reasons for their success. Thus, our approach to planning was systemic—how to involve as many aspects of the system as possible—rather than systematic, focusing on specific steps. All the colleges benefited from the coaching but at different levels, depending on the fit between the coach and the college. Center staff often stepped in to bolster the coaching element.

Coaching Tasks, the RCCI Focus and Community Capacity



SECTION III Analysis

The Rural Community College Initiative was designed to address rural decline. Since its origination in 1994, indicators of decline have trended upward in many cases, resulting in higher rates of population and per capita income decline, leaving rural America with fewer good paying jobs, a gray-ing population, failing infrastructure and a decline in housing stock. More recent research has added the loss of generational wealth transfer to the spiraling down of local assets, thus making less capital and more outside control a reality in many rural places. (See Figure 1)

The RCCI offers a simple formula for reversing this decline in a strategy that:

- Engages people and their organizations and institutions in identifying assets.
- Develops a picture of what reversing the spiral will look like.
- Connects people's passion for their place to action.
- Seeks new collaborations designed to share resources and expertise in order to create that new future.
- Provides limited funding to seed the strategies that come from the engagement process.
- Provides coaching to build capacity and support transformational change.
- Provides linkages to resources and expertise via the Regional Rural Development Centers and their partners.

Figure 1

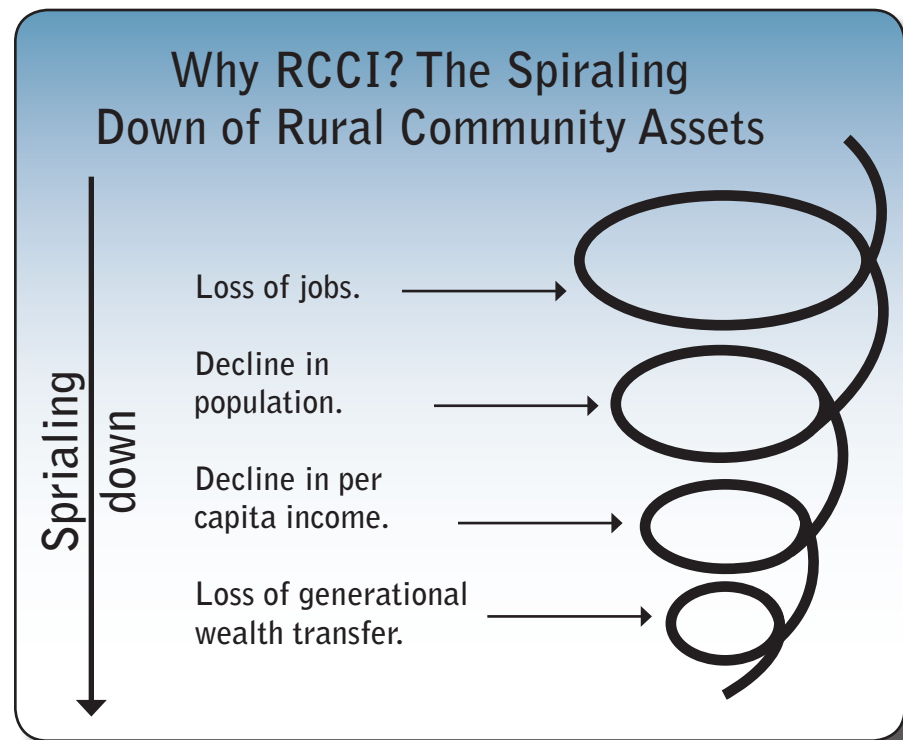
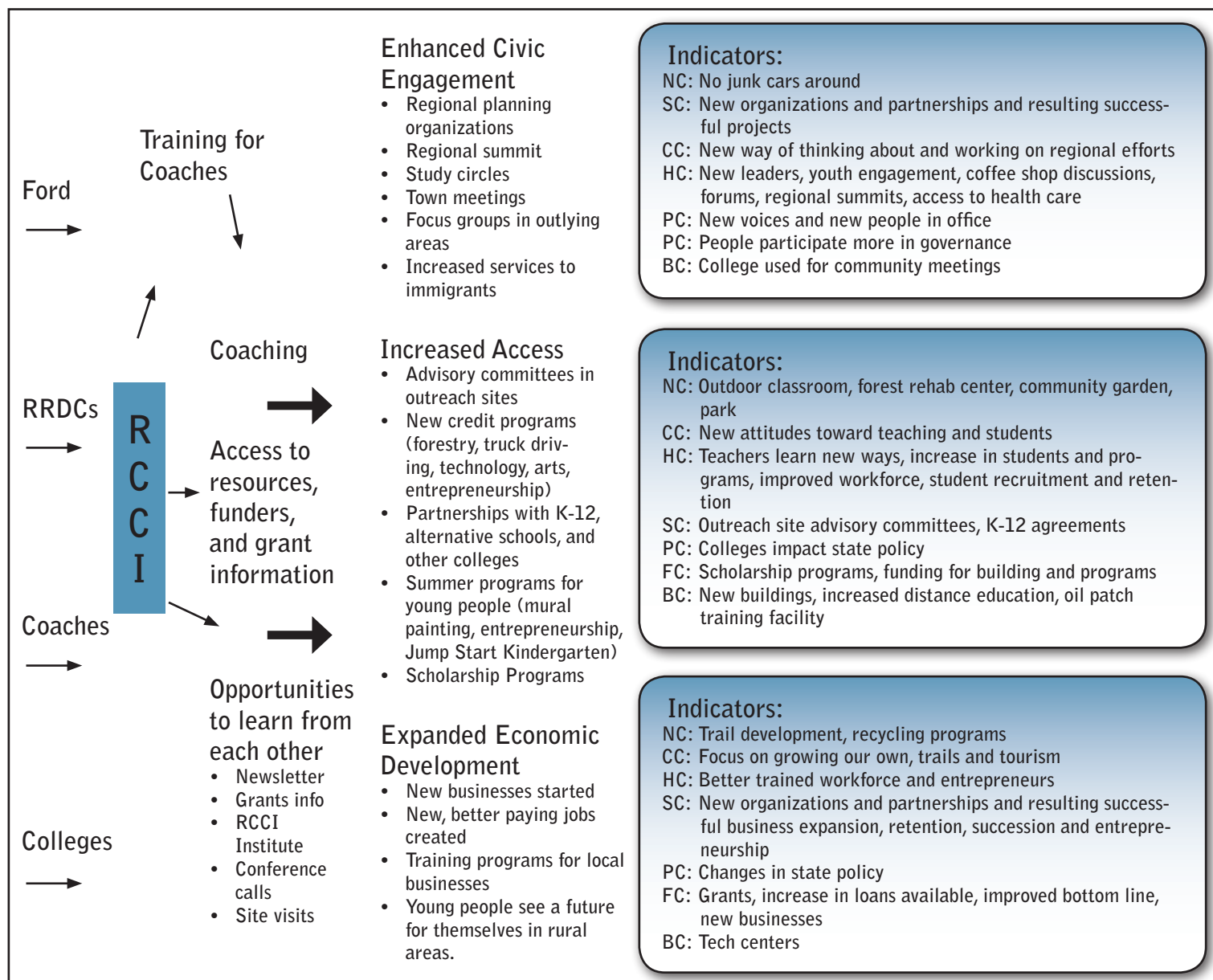
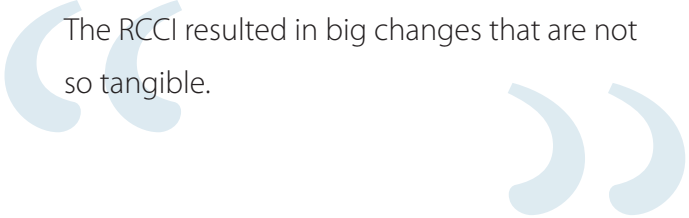


Figure 2



NC=Natural Capital CC=Cultural Capital HC=Human Capital SC=Social Capital PC=Political Capital FC=Financial Capital BC=Built Capital

The RCCI and Levels of Change



The RCCI resulted in big changes that are not so tangible.

Hargrove (1999) describes three types of changes:

1. Incremental or transactional changes that improve practice are indicative of the lowest level of change.
2. Change that reshapes patterns reflects a slightly higher degree of change or transitional change.
3. Transformational change that alters the context and choices represents the highest degree of change.

To paraphrase Hargrove's typology, eight colleges experienced transformational change—altering the context and vision of the possible. Four colleges fundamentally changed patterns in regard to outreach, resulting in new opportunities and providing new tools to the community, and one college participated in a transactional change related to adopting a recognition strategy. Three did not complete the RCCI process. For many of the colleges, the RCCI occurred at a time of great turbulence. For instance, one college experienced five different interim and actual presidencies over the three-year period in which we worked with them. And, as mentioned earlier, the Alaska campuses dropped out as leadership and funding changed. It is interesting to note that these campuses were selected by the administration instead of applying for the opportunity to participate.

Of the eight colleges (Eastern New Mexico University–Roswell, Eastern New Mexico University–Ruidoso, Fort Berthold Community College, Mesalands Community College, Mid-Plains Community College, Northeast Higher Education District, Turtle Mountain Community College and Williston State College) reporting transformational changes, six colleges described more than \$1 million in additional investment into the college. All eight reported the development of new instructional programs and new community partnerships. Despite these accomplishments, when asked what they thought was the Most Significant Change (Dart and Davies 2003), they described changes in community attitudes, particularly in regard to ways of thinking and doing; identifying and using local and regional assets; taking pride in the community; community attitudes toward the college; and understanding how young people play a critical role in communities' futures—all critical impacts that are not so tangible. These comments indicate marked change in how people understand their situation, their opportunities and their potential.

Those colleges experiencing transitional change (Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College, Hawaii Community College, Rochester Community and Technical College, and United Tribes Technical College) opted to expand their outreach work. For Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College, the RCCI's impact was limited to helping them improve their planning and outreach practices. United Tribes Technical College declined to participate in the regular RCCI process, opting to support the other tribal colleges in North Dakota. However, partially as a result of collaboration with the NCRCD, they were able to acquire a \$200,000 EDA technical assistance and training grant, allowing them to work on the first-ever certification program for tribal planners.

Since our contacts at Hawaii Community College are no longer employed at the college, we have limited data on impact. We do know that as a result of the RCCI, the college has expanded its outreach efforts, particularly to Native Hawaiian communities. One larger impact was the creation of collaborative efforts for involving youth in community activities as a way to encourage them to come back to their communities, to be involved in traditional practices, and to look at entrepreneurship as an opportunity for themselves and their community.

We had limited action at Little Priest Tribal College, and they eventually dropped out of the project when a sixth college president took leadership. Yet, our work with them on Appreciative Inquiry led to a campus recognition effort. Bristol Bay and Northwest Campuses in Alaska dropped out. None of these three accessed their planning monies, and only Little Priest Tribal College made use of coaching support.

What are the characteristics of success? Our successful projects generally had stable, committed leaders willing to partner equally with other agencies and organizations. They also had minimal turnover in team participation. The more successful colleges were also those that sought out opportunities, while those less successful had the opportunity brought to them. The Alaska and Hawaii colleges were both chosen by the National Rural Funders Collaborative as a follow up to other funded projects. In the case of the tribal colleges, we recruited them to participate via site visits. With the exception of United Tribes Technical College, all three of the other colleges experienced personnel changes in presidency, team leaders and team members, making consistent participation impossible. Lacking human capital to sustain an RCCI effort, the project had no major impact on some of these colleges or the communities they serve.

In general, those colleges that sought out the opportunity, had strong consistent leadership, were willing to enter into collaborations, and focused on strategies rather than projects were more successful with the RCCI process. They also said having the Ford Foundation name attached to their RCCI work helped them get people's attention and commitment. In contrast, the RCCI resulted in lower levels of change when the RCCI sought out the colleges, leadership was in transition, and resources for collaboration were minimal.

Using the Community Capitals Framework to Study Impact and Sustainability

Cornelia and Jan Flora with Susan Fey (2004) developed the **Community Capitals Framework** as an approach to analyze how communities work. Based on their research to uncover characteristics of entrepreneurial and sustainable communities, they found that the communities most successful in supporting healthy sustainable community and economic development paid attention to all seven types of capital: natural, cultural, human, social, political, financial and built.²

- **Natural capital** is particularly critical for the tribal colleges. Natural capital provides the possibilities and limitations for all the other capitals. It includes air, water, land, biodiversity and landscape. Humans can influence the quality of natural capital either positively or negatively.

² Based on recommendations from the Ames working session, we present seven capitals by separating built capital and financial capital.

- **Cultural capital** reflects creativity, innovation and influence that emerge and are nurtured. Cultural capital might include ethnic festivals, multi-lingual populations or a strong work ethic.
- **Human capital** includes the skills and abilities of people, as well as the ability to access outside resources and bodies of knowledge in order to increase understanding and identify promising practices. Human capital also addresses leadership's ability to "lead across differences," to focus on assets, to be inclusive and participatory, and to be proactive in shaping the future of the community or group.
- **Social capital** reflects the connections among people and organizations or the social glue to make things happen. **Bonding social capital** refers to those close ties that build community cohesion. **Bridging social capital** involves weak ties that create and maintain bridges among organizations and communities.
- **Political capital** reflects access to power and power brokers, such as access to a local office of a member of Congress, access to local, county, state or tribal government officials, or leverage with a regional company.
- **Financial capital** refers to the financial resources available to invest in community capacity building, to underwrite business development, to support civic and social entrepreneurship, and to accumulate wealth for future community development.

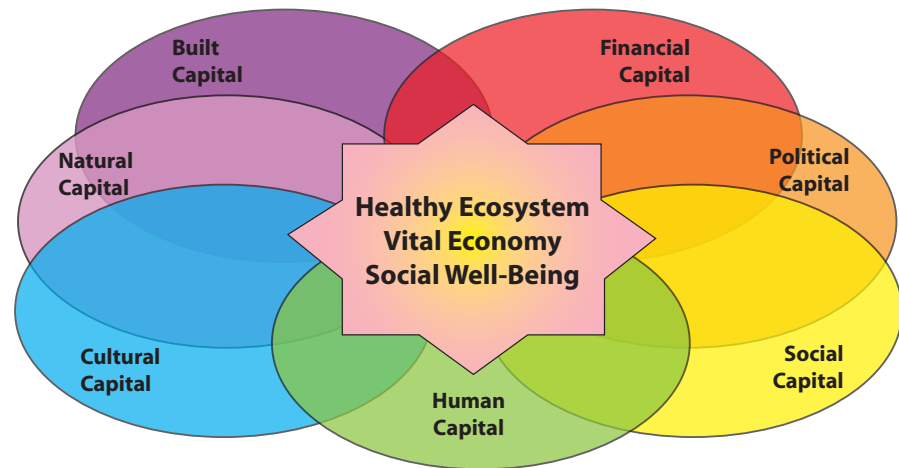


Figure 3. Community Capitals

- **Built capital** refers to the infrastructure that supports the community such as telecommunications, industrial parks, main streets, water and sewer systems, roads, etc. Built capital is often a focus of community development efforts.

In addition to identifying the capitals and the role each plays in community economic development, this approach also focuses on the interaction among these seven capitals, as well as how investments in one capital can build assets in others.

By using the CCF to focus our inquiry on how the RCCI has made a difference for colleges and the community or communities they serve, we can look for outputs (actions, events, programs, etc.), outcomes (how people benefit or not from those actions, events, programs, etc.), and impacts (how systems change as a result of the actions, events, programs, etc.) across



Figure 4

the community. In order to capture this information, we used a technique called Spider graphing or Webbing. The purpose of the spider graph is to work from the concrete RCCI activities to a more abstract understanding of the impact of those activities.

The CCF suggests that strategies or projects that invest (access or mobilize) assets from multiple capitals will be more sustainable and have a greater impact than those that focus on one or two capitals. Thus, the CCF can help us explain the success of those colleges experiencing transformational change. As illustrated in the spirals, tables and maps, these colleges invested assets across the capitals with particular emphasis on social, cultural and human capitals assets that allowed them to create new financial, built, natural and political capitals. Among tribal and Native-serving colleges, the ability to invest cultural assets to create additional assets across the capitals helped to strengthen traditions and heritage. At the same time it built

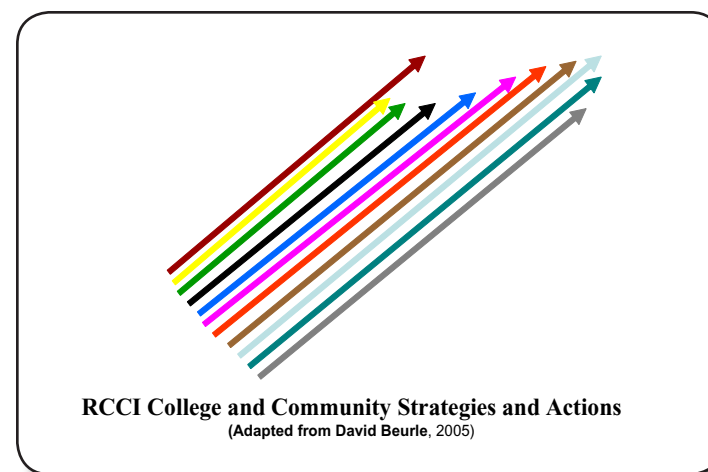


Figure 5

new assets in human capital related to stronger identities and recognition of traditional skills and wisdom. The RCCI process helped focus these assets and align strategies on specific well-understood and supported goals. Thus, RCCI college/community partnerships grew out of the situation depicted in Figure 4 into a situation more like that illustrated in Figure 5.

Maps, Tables of Impact by Community Capitals and Spirals for 12 of the colleges can be accessed in Section IV.

Conclusions and Lessons Learned

Earlier we identified the questions we sought to answer in this report:

To what extent did dropping that pebble into the community college environment create ripples of change?

Using the Community Capital Framework to analyze the mobilized and invested assets provides clear evidence that the RCCI pebble created a ripple that interacted with local conditions and trends to create a wave of transformational change.

How sustainable are those changes?

Using the mapping process allowed us to identify specific changes in systems related to the capitals. As change contributes to institutionalization of new patterns within systems and institutions, these new patterns provide strong evidence of sustainability. Once established as part of existing systems, there is less chance they will disappear. In particular, where these changes indicate transformations in belief systems, the probability of sustainability is strong.

What processes were used to leverage \$15,000, coaching and connections to more than \$1 million in additional investment?

We were particularly intrigued that \$15,000 became more than \$1 million in so many locations and determined to learn more about this process. Our focus group insisted that access to “mad” or seed money creates a unique opportunity for colleges to build change strategies organically, rather than forcing them into a predetermined linear strategy, which describes most grant funding

What are indicators of transformational change?

Our mapping exercises indicated that dollars leveraged are an important indicator of impact. We suggest, however, that the systems-level changes in cultural and political capital may

provide the best indicators of transformational change. As college faculty and staff and community members reframe the possible, they direct themselves toward new potentials and possibilities and create a new vision of who they are and what they can do that will continue to invoke change strategies into the future.

What can we learn from this process that can improve funding practices and results?

Clearly, \$15,000, coaching and connections to resources have created a substantial return on investment for the Ford Foundation. We suggest that funders consider this lesson and look for ways to improve on this model: provision of seed money, coaching and links to resources as strategies to address transformational capacity building for community colleges and the communities they serve.

What factors contributed to widespread ripples becoming waves?

We believe five factors contributed to the astonishing success of this phase of the RCCI.

1. ***The moral obligation to pay attention.*** The RCCI process provided a means by which the colleges could attend to their moral obligation to pay attention to community issues and concerns.
2. ***Changing patterns.*** In the *Neuroscience of Leadership* (Rock 2006), the authors reflect on how the brain exudes a great deal of energy when encountering an event for which it has no pattern or when it is challenged to rein-

vent patterns. Similarly, changing patterns of everyday life in community and colleges requires great effort. Once the new patterns settle in, people no longer expend great energy in maintaining them. Getting patterns accepted to create the tipping point where these changes are integrated into everyday life, and people participate in them without thinking is a stumbling block for many community and college change initiatives. Creating a mechanism that allowed the college to feel its way to the tipping point was successful in eight of the 15 cases.

3. ***Social capital and the radius of trust.*** In order for systems and organizations to change, people have to have a degree of trust in the people and the process. The wide variety of community engagement strategies employed by our RCCI colleges indicates the importance of those processes being not only place-based but locally owned. Over and over in the mapping process, we heard the word “trust.” A critical element to growing social capital is the expansion of the radius of trust (Fukuyama 1999). As this radius grows and includes more partners, colleges are able to mobilize more people, energy, resources and collaborative efforts.
4. ***The expansion of social capital.*** Not only did the colleges create more bonding social capital among local agencies and organizations and within the college itself, it also created substantial bridging social capital, a key factor in the ability of colleges to leverage additional resources.
5. ***The development of knowledge management.*** The RCCI process began with a tacit acknowledgement that local expertise and wisdom is as essential as the knowledge

contributed by outside experts. Colleges followed this example, recognizing and soliciting local knowledge and expertise to compliment college expertise. In this way the RCCI initiatives have brought an appreciation of different forms of knowledge—tacit and explicit—into the planning and implementation process. The RCCI has also encouraged reflection and attention to lessons learned, critical elements of a strong capacity building program.

Implications for Future Funding Cycles

The RCCI demonstrates the power of this strategy to create capacity, both at the college and the community level, to address the complex economic development issues in rural America and to foster more equitable opportunity structures. As the Ford Foundation looks at how to incorporate learning from past initiatives into future funding, we suggest that this approach warrants further investment. Despite local turbulence, resources that support engagement, capacity building and the opportunity to grow strategies for transformational change organically have paid off with truly strategic capacity building initiatives, in ways the college could not have predicted nor have been able to write into a traditional proposal for funding support.

SECTION IV **College Transformations**

Eastern New Mexico University–Roswell

Chavez County, with Roswell as its center of commercial, government and social interaction, lies in sparsely populated eastern New Mexico. Although the county has a diversified economy, it struggles with challenges related to workforce, diversity and pockets of high poverty. Its profile indicates a number of demographic and social changes poised on the verge of spiraling down with increased violence, gangs, drugs and other impacts often connected with poverty and disenfranchised population groups. Instead of focusing on the downward spiral, the RCCI team at ENMU–Roswell chose to view the county as a place where good things can happen. They mounted a community-based effort to create a place that accepts the challenges and responsibility for providing all children with the resources needed to become healthy, productive members of society.

The RCCI planning process provided the college with needed information to proactively develop programs that address and support Roswell's goals and vision of the future. In addition, the process created numerous opportunities for new partnerships and leveraging resources, and it aided the college in addressing accreditation planning requirements.

Comprised of college staff, city and county officials, the head of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and several community

volunteers, the planning team thought that if they wanted to make a real difference in the economy and the existing opportunity structure, they should focus on the challenges created by the current workforce. In their studies of what could be done, they saw a need for prevention rather than just intervention.

As a result, their project began with a small-scale, not-so-revolutionary mentoring program at the middle school near the college. They also adopted the elementary school adjacent to the college, which serves children from families with the highest levels of poverty. They believed that providing these children with extra help would enable them to catch up and complete their high school education. When the mentors/tutors met to talk about their work, they found that many children lacked confidence in the ability of the family to financially or emotionally support them through high school.

In discussions with the college endowment staff, the team found a way to offer College Access Program Scholarships (CAPS) to support to each child graduating from the local elementary school. Under the CAPS program, businesses, organizations or individuals can sponsor one student, a group of students or an entire graduating fifth grade class from a particular elementary school for \$50 per student. Students receive an additional \$50 for each year of school completed through high school graduation. The ENMU–Roswell Foundation invested the scholarship money in an interest-bearing account and will

transfer the funds to graduating seniors once those graduates enroll in classes at ENMU–Roswell. The funds could be used for tuition, fees, books, supplies and tools as needed.

The RCCI team did not end their efforts with one school. Instead they challenged the community to adopt other schools. To date, two additional schools have been adopted by companies or institutions and several more are in the process of being adopted. Adopting a school means that every student will have access to a tutor if needed, a mentor, after-school programming and a scholarship. In addition to helping children, focus group respondents reported that participation in CAPS increases employee morale and reduces absenteeism and tardiness, thus increasing the bottom line for participating companies and agencies.

As a follow-up to the CAPS project, the college developed a learn-and-serve program in occupational therapy where students assist with a JumpStart pre-kindergarten camp. In the first year of this activity, the school reported moving from more than 50% of the students testing below benchmark to 92% at benchmark or above. The intervention continued through the school year, providing teachers with developmentally appropriate strategies for addressing classroom behavior, leading to the potential for students to succeed in future grades. Learn-and-serve students reported that participation increased their skills and their employability.

New Mexico uses third grade reading scores to predict future prison population, so one of the team's goals is to reduce the forecast for the number of prison beds.

Their success in all of these endeavors has led to donations of land, seed and plants for a community garden project which they started this spring.

In addition to interventions with students and schools, the RCCI team has hosted a number of funders' forums, providing local nonprofits with new skills and abilities in grant writing and opportunities to meet with funders. Regional funders have met to discuss strategies to work together to have a stronger impact in the region as a result.

The RCCI team efforts and college leadership have brought in additional dollars to support community healthcare and to help children become employable, responsible adults and college students. They have also brought new players to the table and new sources of funding. Because of their good work, a bond to support a new health sciences building was passed, providing new space for community health and other programs.

Reported RCCI Activities

- Scholarship program
- Tutoring
- Mentoring
- After-school programs
- Alternative high school curriculum development
- Community health
- JumpStart pre-kindergarten camp
- Regional grant development training
- Regional convening of grantors to focus strategically on key issues
- Seamless curriculum for alternative school students interested in a college vocational degree
- Expansion of community health services
- Survey of community needs
- Support for youth entrepreneurship
- Development of a community garden

Eastern New Mexico University–Roswell: Spiraling Up of Community Capital Assets

Sustainability

Phase 3

Phase 2

Phase 1

Employers adopt schools and provide scholarships; kids contribute to the community; college becomes a community for Sunset kids; More students involved in service learning; change in overall attitude toward students; new building houses health care programs; local economy benefits from better workers and more entrepreneurs.

Kids grow up to be better employees, college graduates, and contribute to the community; students have access to parks and physical education; students feel at home at the college; students and families have access to healthcare; learn and serve students; local teachers learn skills, kids do better.

Faculty and staff provide tutoring; partnership with Sunset school; involve the college in after-school programs; expansion of community health programs; service learning programs impact kindergartners; development of seamless curriculum for college and alternative school; development of community garden.

Social, political and human capital resources mobilized to address workforce issues.

The RCCI creates bridging social capital to bring outside expertise together with internal wisdom.

Spiraling
up

Eastern New Mexico University–Roswell: Community Capitals Impact Map

Most Significant Change: Overall positive community attitude about preparing students; openness of foundations to support this; community more aware of the importance of education.

	Short-term changes	Mid-term changes	Long-term changes
Natural capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park built on their side of town. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students have access to parks. • More opportunity for physical education. 	
Cultural capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chavez County supported education. • Kids' parents see college as a real possibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community becomes more aware of cultures because people are more aware of needs. • Rich lady tells her friends to send their kids to Sunset as the best school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kids will contribute to the community. • Openness of foundations to support strategic grant making and helping kids. • Overall attitude about preparing students has changed. • College becomes a community for Sunset kids.
Human capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dental van. • Teachers want to work with students. • College involvement with community programs and younger children. • Community more aware of the importance of education. • More interdisciplinary approaches. • Kids get access to dental, pharmacy and oral health training. • Summer program for pre-kindergartners. • OT students learn practical skills. • Students develop skills and abilities to test at benchmark for kindergarten. • Teachers open to new techniques from OT. • Kids need less discipline; increased attendance rates. • Parents take more interest in education and get their kids to school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kids grow up to be better employees and successful college graduates. They are better prepared for jobs and get jobs and some may want to work with kids. • Better No Child Left Behind stats for the district. • Kids do better in school and feel successful. • 60% of first year CAPS students still in school at 9th grade. • Jump Start for everyone. • Parents become better parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other schools will benefit from this example. • Teachers and social workers are more skilled at helping children with developmental tasks and skills. • Increased involvement of students in service learning.
Social capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elementary school parents bond with school personnel. • Get local funders together to talk about impact. • Improved communication among parents, teachers, and college faculty and staff. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kids will contribute to the community.
Political capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for college funding from county, city and state. • Superintendent more supportive and willing to let things happen. • Find support for park on their side of town. 		

The Rural Community College Initiative to Build New Partnerships in Support of America's Rural Communities

Financial capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General bond for Chavez County and college passes. • Local fund supports programs. • People give dollars to scholarships for kids. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased costs to school district for special education services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kids will contribute to the community. • Employers see increased efficiency with better employees.
Built capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College has new building that will include community pharmacy and dental. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students have access to the base campus.

Eastern New Mexico University—Ruidoso

Unlike many other rural areas, Ruidoso, New Mexico, is growing with new businesses, residents and jobs. Indeed, attracting enough qualified workers to accommodate their high volume tourism season is an ongoing struggle. At the time the RCCI began, ENMU–Ruidoso was an off-campus instructional center with a local director. In July 2005 it was legislatively approved to become a branch campus of the ENMU system with a provost who reports to the president of the ENMU–Portales campus. Dr. Mike Elrod was appointed as its first provost in January 2005.

Returning home from the RCCI Institute, the ENMU–Ruidoso team determined to conduct focus groups in their outreach sites to learn more about what the communities wanted and how the college could assist. The team received training in Appreciative Inquiry and used that training to facilitate these sessions. These meetings impacted not only the college but the community as well. For example, Carrizozo decided to do a community clean-up project—which has been repeated regularly, to begin a recycling program—which has led to a county-wide effort, and to focus on economic development. Carrizozo is now becoming known as an arts community. Other communities followed up on these focus group ideas as well.

As a result of these sessions the college began conducting regular information nights in these communities. Later, they hired a full-time coordinator. They also planned and hosted a regional meeting—no small feat in this part of New Mexico with its history of contentious relations around water and other resources—and developed a strategic plan.

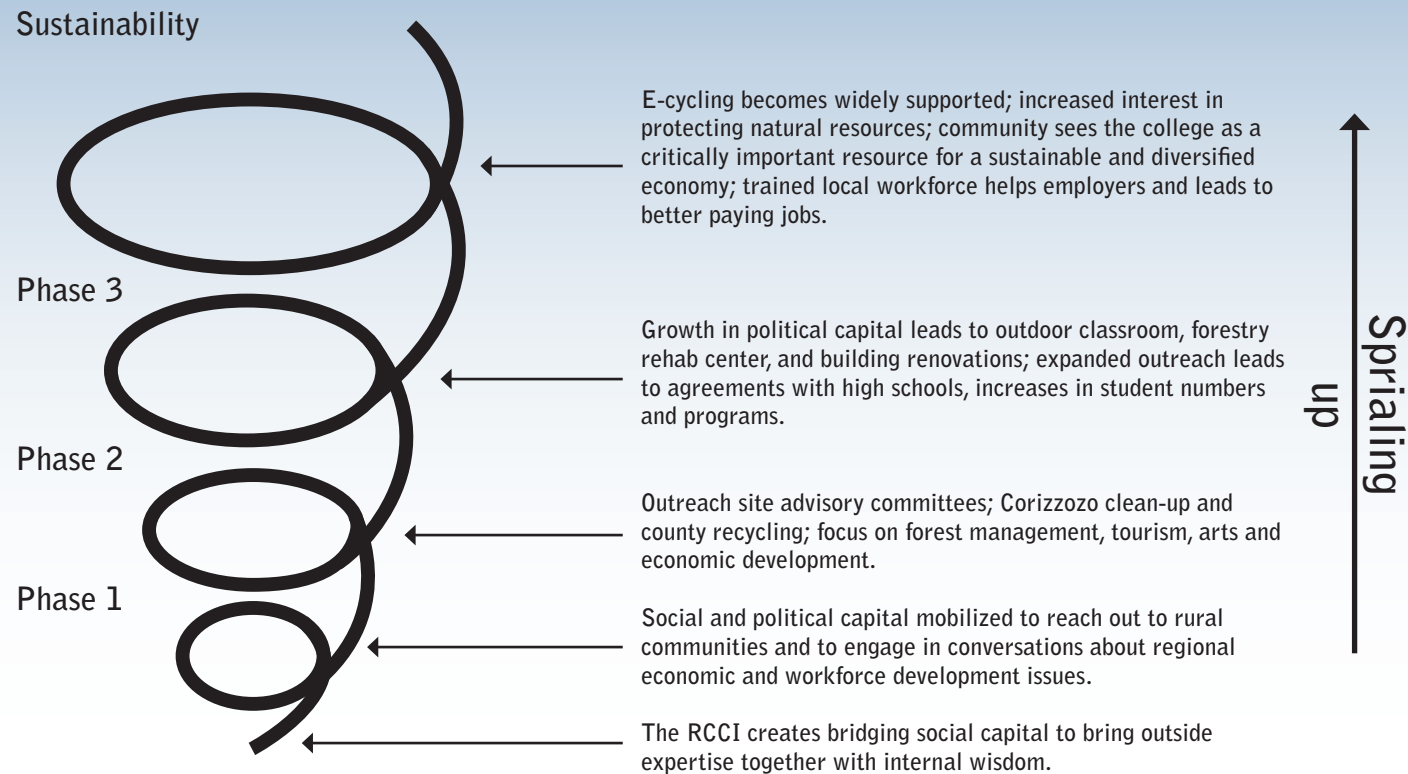
In addition to outreach coordination with local schools and communities, ENMU–Ruidoso developed for-credit programs to support local industries, including tourism and hospitality services, construction trades and an outdoor classroom. They also built a forestry rehabilitation center, created in collaboration with the Ruidoso Municipal School District and funded by a U.S. Forest Service grant totaling \$350,000 over three years. They also expanded efforts to support the local artists and the arts-related businesses by offering training opportunities. A local bond issue was approved by county voters in 2004 and 2006 with a combined total of \$2 million to remodel and expand the campus facilities, thus increasing capacity to better serve students and to support local employers seeking workforce training.

As a direct result of the RCCI initiative and seed funding, the ENMU–Ruidoso campus has received increased community support and recognition for its outreach activities. In addition to the Forest Service grant and campus improvement funding levels, the college received \$20,000 for a customized training program with emphasis on improving the skills of local hospitality and tourism employees. The college also coordinated and hosted the first ever Economic Development Summit in May 2007, partially underwritten by the RCCI. Outcomes of the event will lead to a local economic development organization and increased support for planned economic development throughout Ruidoso and the region. Since 2004, the economic impact of ENMU–Ruidoso on Lincoln County has grown substantially from \$4 million dollars to \$10 million, doubling the campus operational budget.

Reported RCCI Activities

- Focus groups in outreach communities
- Strategic planning
- Outreach work with K-12 systems and communities
- College involvement in workforce and economic development
- Regional economic development summit

Eastern New Mexico University–Ruidoso: Spiraling Up of Community Capital Assets



Eastern New Mexico University–Ruidoso: Community Capitals Impact Map

Most Significant Change: Increased awareness of the college and what it can do for the region.

	Short-term changes	Mid-term changes	Long-term changes
Natural capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College works with partners to design and restore original forest as part of forestry program to create an outdoor classroom available to the community and schools. Corrizozo clean-up comes from focus group discussion. The college continues involvement in waste management and recycling. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-cycling becomes widely supported. Protection of natural resources.
Cultural capital		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More interest in the community about the college. Increased awareness of how the college can help the community. 	
Human capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified employment niches that fit with the regional economy. College works with partners to design and restore original forest as part of forestry program to create an outdoor classroom available to the community and schools. Development of forestry program. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased wages lead to higher quality of life.
Social capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Economic Development Summit. Connections made in outreach sites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New regional partnerships. Support for forest management work. K-12 partnership for distance education. 	
Political capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State land controversy resolved with the college taking a role in managing property to increase access to land for education under a lease agreement to the village. 		
Financial capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant from U.S. Forest Service for \$350,000. \$1.2 million bond passed to support expansion of the campus. Elected five-member board to support college. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College works to help sustain local natural resource-based economy. Businesses benefit from hiring and forest rehabilitation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More sustainable and diversified economy. Increased wages lead to higher quality of life.
Built capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded campus and use of more telecommunications. 		

Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College

The RCCI project at Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College (FDTCC) began just as a new president came on board. Working with their University of Minnesota (UM) coach, the team decided to focus on learning more about how the college was serving the outreach areas. They were also interested in learning more about Appreciative Inquiry as a way to frame this data-gathering effort.

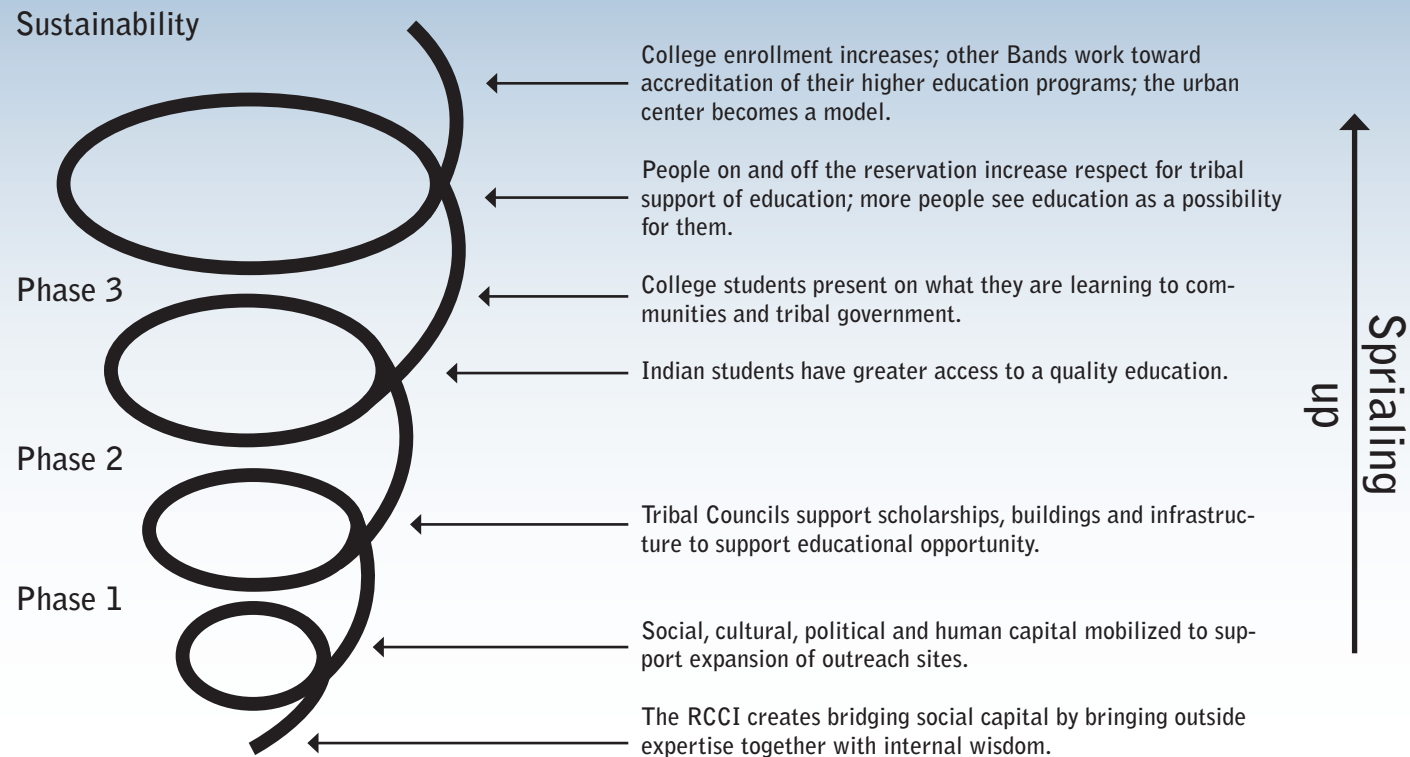
Following an Appreciative Inquiry workshop jointly sponsored by UM and FDTCC, the team designed questions for focus groups. A local FDTCC person and UM Extension facilitator then teamed together to conduct the focus groups at outreach sites on the Bois Forte, Grand Portage, Red Lake, Fond du Lac and Mille Lacs reservations. They also held one at their urban outreach center in Augsburg, which provided access to urban Indian students as well as members of an urban Hmong community. The 55 people who participated developed a positive core of what is working well, including using local people as instructors, making curriculum relevant and supporting the transfer of culture. They also had suggestions on how to make access and retention efforts more effective by helping younger people make a connection to the college, expanding cultural aspects and increasing offerings.

As a result of the focus groups, FDTCC has increased their support of outreach efforts and have assisted Bands, like Mille Lacs and Red Lake, in building their outreach centers and creating their own tribal colleges.

Reported RCCI Activities

- Appreciative Inquiry training.
- Focus groups at outreach sites.
- Expansion of outreach activities.


Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College: Spiraling Up of Community Capital Assets



Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College: Community Capitals Impact Map

	Short-term changes	Mid-term changes	Long-term changes
Natural capital			
Cultural capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As much as possible, use local instructors who know the area and understand the culture. • Mille Lacs engages Elders to mentor and support students and the students make presentations to their communities on what they are learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students appreciate culture and learn language and other culturally important skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture linked to education programs and opportunities. • Changes in reservation-based communities lead to greater respect in the adjacent dominant communities as they see reservations putting resources into education. • The urban center has become a model.
Human capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mille Lacs supports full-service outreach site. • 68 full-time students. • Cohort of students earning a degree in chemical dependency counseling. • 40 students enrolled in Augsburg and 2 FTE staff members provide services. • Mille Lacs opens two additional charter schools with culturally-based curriculum called Leadership Academies which will connect seamlessly to the new college once it is accredited. • Red Lake increased services to students and now has 50 students. • Bois Forte has a cohort of 18 students earning an AS in business and finance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased enrollment. • Student interns increase community access to chemical dependency counseling. • Use wisdom from outreach communities and the AI study. • Older generation of chemical dependency counselors can pass their knowledge to new generation of workers. • College works with new and existing students on goal setting so they hear students talk about getting a Masters or PhD. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are role models for young people and others on the reservation that college can “work for you.” • College creates an educated workforce from existing and potential workers.
Social capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger relationships among outreach sites, FDLTCC and Tribal Councils. • Outreach students attend graduation ceremonies at FDLTCC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students increase access to networks and participation in networks. • Chemical dependency students have access to mentors and internship positions through attending chemical dependency-related yearly conferences. 	
Political capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach efforts connected to the accreditation committee. • College does more reporting on outreach sites. • Students make presentations to the Tribal Council, the business committee and the Tribal Boards at Mille Lacs. • Students attend Council to fight for funding for education. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribal Councils more supportive of education overall. • Students have a voice and are respected at Council.
Financial capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities contribute funding for scholarships, building and infrastructure to support education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased student fees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities give a lot more money for scholarships, buildings and infrastructure as they see investment in education as critical. • More educated people within a community helps to build wealth.
Built capital			

Fort Berthold Community College



The planning process was a catalyst to broaden our sight and vision, to see exactly what we were doing. It started a process that has led to developing new organizational ways around planning and reporting.

Located on the Fort Berthold Reservation in northwest North Dakota, Fort Berthold Community College serves the Three Affiliated Tribes: Mandan, Arikawa and Hidatsa.

Families and communities on the reservation were relocated when the construction of Garrison Dam flooded the rich bottom land where families had gardened, farmed, hunted and gathered local plants and medicines.

The RCCI planning process at Fort Berthold supported students' collection of information on educational opportunities and challenges from all four reservation districts. This information helped them craft a self-study for accreditation purposes, and the process helped them to recognize what they were doing well. They were then able to develop formal processes for capturing and assessing those practices.

Central to this work was the development of a cultural rubric where their cultural committee met regularly, encouraged people to learn words from each others' languages, and set up

forums and brown bags to offer additional opportunities for them to learn from one another. The community was invited to participate in these activities.

In addition to the cultural rubric, the college formalized procedures for grant writing so that proposals address the strategic plan and partnerships with other institutions to ensure equal benefits for all. Now, they feel their college is seen as equal with other colleges and universities.

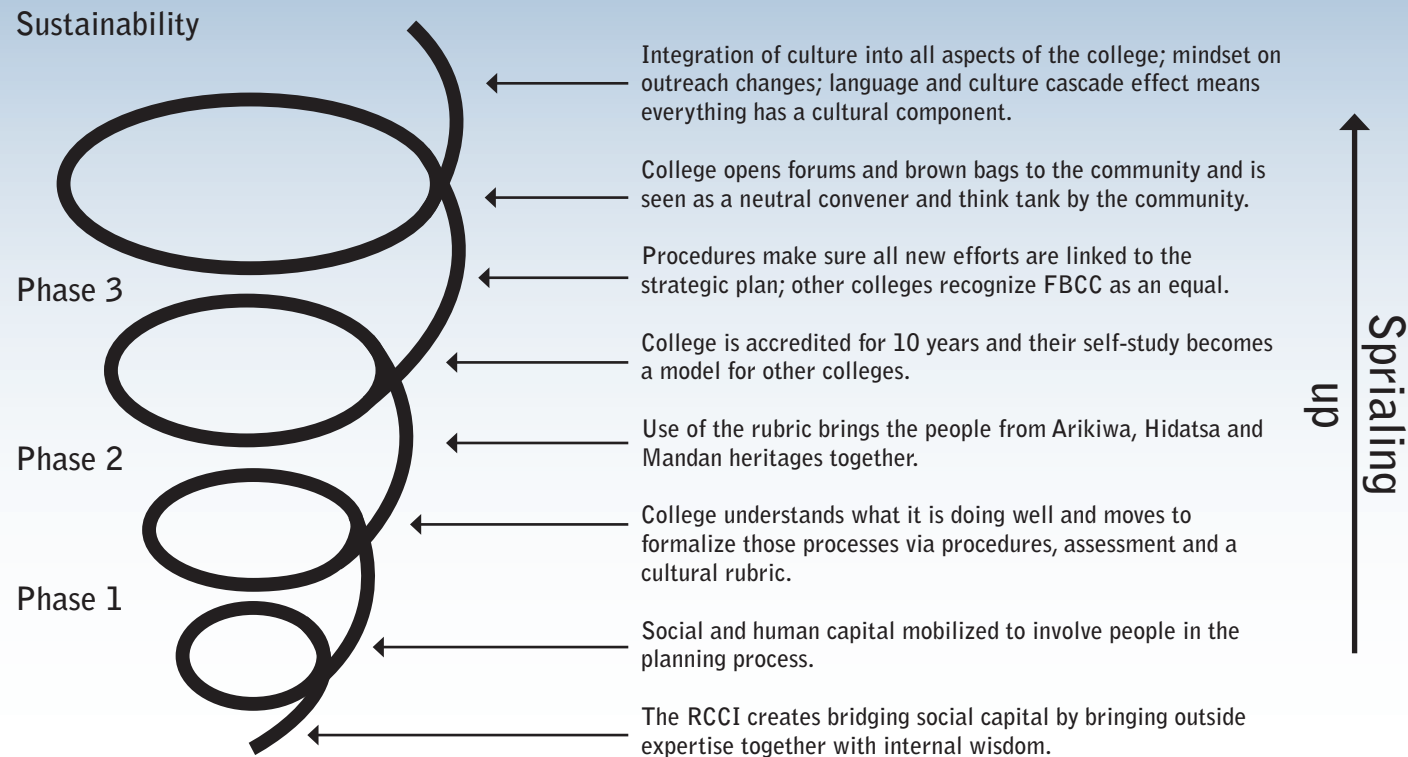
FBCC's outreach efforts have increased the connections between the college and the communities they serve. People see the college as a neutral convener as it has hosted forums for political candidates and other issues, some of which are broadcasted out to the various districts. The community has now asked the college to host a forum on a proposed refinery.

As a result of the RCCI planning activities, FBCC sees the integration of culture into all aspects of the college. The "language and culture cascade effect means everything has a cultural component." They feel that the mindset at the college on how and why to reach out has changed, making it more connected to the communities. In addition, FBCC has developed new organizational practices around planning and reporting.

Reported RCCI Activities

- Students collected data from all the districts.
- Self-study report.
- Strategic planning.

Fort Berthold Community College: Spiraling Up of Community Capital Assets



Fort Berthold Community College: Community Capitals Impact Map

Most Significant Change: Integration of culture into all aspects of the college.

	Short-term changes	Mid-term changes	Long-term changes
Natural capital			
Cultural capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College develops cultural rubric, so that students learn something about each tribe. Cultural committee meets to address strategic plan goals. Building blocks for curriculum move knowledge and activities from oral traditions to measurable format. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Old Chiefs Society student organization is involved in planning the graduation Pow-Wow and promoting links to culture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of culture into all aspects of the college. Mindset on how and why to reach out has changed at the college. College has developed new organizational ways around planning and reporting. Language and culture cascade effect means everything has a cultural component.
Human capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing curriculum for corrections facility with a university partner. Building blocks for curriculum move knowledge and activities from oral traditions to measurable format. Use tribal timelines as part of teaching in biology. Formalized planning and assessment process. New assessment process for students includes portfolios. College offers brown bag sessions and other educational opportunities to the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning helped them discover what they are doing well and formalize it. New processes help people stay on track. College now provides training for other tribal groups. Community sees the college as a think tank. College has a way to assess its progress and report on it. Students develop a stronger sense of identity. Working on interim day-care. College offers more opportunities to learn from one another. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning to become a four-year institution. Planning opened people's eye to see their success and developed a recording process. College has changed the view of what a college can do. Process brought out the importance of identity.
Social capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College works with other colleges on curriculum. College does more community service and links the community to the college. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New approach to curriculum breaks down barriers among tribes. Collaboration means they are all part of the process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community trusts the college. New process means partnerships with other institutions must be mutually beneficial.
Political capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College develops formalized planning and assessment process. Broadcast tribal chairman candidate debates. College offers public forums on issues—they have been asked to do one on the refinery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students and community members recognize voices from different tribes and respect them. Collaboration means they are all part of the process. Innovative way to address new accreditation requirement. They are invited to submit report as a model. Provide assistance in revising the tribal constitution by bringing people into the process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognition from other colleges and agencies that the FBCC is an equal institution. College improves overall organization structure with new processes people follow. College seen as neutral convener to help people gain knowledge to make good decisions. 10-year accreditation with no interim visits. People make more informed decisions.
Financial capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented a formalized process for grant writing—all grants must address strategic goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They are implementing a tight process and improving their audits. College captures financial aspects of activities by offering credit. Planning provides opportunity to improve marketing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College is doing better financially.
Built capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning created formalized building plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New smart classrooms and mobile media carts. Improved cafeteria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Push opportunities to the communities with satellite.

Hawaii Community College

The Hawaii Community College serves the Big Island and is based in Hilo. During the three years they were involved with the RCCI, the college experienced several major changes in personnel and both team leaders have since left the institution. Because they were also involved with the NCRCD in the Promising Practices project funded by the National Rural Funders Collaborative, much of our work with them centered around two community projects that the college supported.

The Makuu Farmers' Market is run by a Native Homelands group to provide a local outlet for foods and crafts and to provide an entrepreneurial experience for young people. The Kauu Community Health Center works with young people to provide educational and social opportunities. They have developed an expanded First Responder program that serves many young people. Graduates of this program develop respect for traditional culture along with new skills, and several have decided to pursue health careers in college. Their RCCI project brought young people from both projects together in a planning forum to learn from one another and to develop new strategies. The sessions were highly successful for participants, and the college has developed stronger ties to these communities as a result.

3. Identify and work with partners in the community
4. Training opportunities for community and staff
 - a. Appreciative Inquiry and using those skills with communities and colleges
 - b. Community capitals
5. Sharing experiences with others and taking that back to the college or community
6. Youth views were expressed and heard
7. Access to information and networking from the Center was beneficial
8. Modeling leadership

Reported RCCI Activities and Thoughts

1. College and university need to go out to the community to increase access
2. Community groups came together
 - a. Found their voice
 - b. Identified assets to use
 - c. Built political, cultural and social capacity

Hawaii Community College: Spiraling Up of Community Capital Assets

Sustainability

Phase 3

Phase 2

Phase 1

RCCI leaves a legacy of social capital; support for strengthening cultural capital and preserving the landscape; young people see themselves as resources for the community's future; more participation with college increases human and social capital assets.

Cultural capital increases as pride and hope in the community grow and young people want to return; community sees value in college and better understands how to access services.

Improves intergenerational communication and mutual respect; kids take responsibility and are off the streets; provides role models for Native-Hawaiians.

Social capital mobilized to link to Native-Hawaiian projects and to focus on helping young people.

The RCCI creates bridging social capital by bringing outside expertise together with internal wisdom.

Spiraling
up

Hawaii Community College: Community Capitals Impact Map

Most Significant Change: The RCCI project brought about an awareness that education comes in many different forms, especially outside the classroom. Today, the community college is branching out more and offering more educational courses in communities, rather than having students drive many miles to the campus. The college is much more aware that they have community leaders who are knowledgeable and want successful educational experiences for their youth, who have many challenges. Some of these community leaders are partnering with the college in projects and have become great supporters of the college's goals within the island communities. Another change is increased networking with other university counterparts, such as the University of Hawaii Manoa College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources. There seems to be more sharing within the university system as they look at what is best for students seeking personalized educational goals. Families, the community and its people benefit from the resources that are available for everyone as a whole.

	Short-term changes	Mid-term changes	Long-term changes
Natural capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmers' market. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmers' market enhancements lead to more community development processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preserve natural landscape that fits with environment.
Cultural capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people are more connected to culture and area. There is no graffiti at the farmers' market. Makuu uses cultural capital to engage youth and the community. Adults understand that youth want to come home. Youth are no longer afraid of uncle Pedro. There is more intergenerational working together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makuu reassesses goals based on success. Parents develop respect for youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth are prepared to make a difference. Adults learn to take a step back. People are getting outside the box. See themselves as part of the global economy. They have an international presence. More risk-taking.
Human capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth develop business skills and responsibilities. Young people learned about their community. New farmers' training is available. Increased understanding of area homelands. Increased awareness of land-grant, tribal and community colleges. More young people interested in college. People know more about being in a business. Increased understanding of Communities for Extension. Young people and adults know who to talk with about what on campus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More kids off the streets and off drugs. Increased access to education in Native communities. Youth have more skills they can use in their communities. Adults more interested in college. People have access to more knowledge. Role models for Hawaiian women. Technology is here to stay and youth help with technology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safer communities.
Social capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bridging with charter schools and bridging among communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmers' market enhancements lead to more community social capacity. More networking with other organizations and community members. More joint efforts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They have an international presence. Mutual respect between generations. More opportunities for community visioning.
Political capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth have a voice and use it. A Native Hawaiian runs for office. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role models for participating politically. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognition that youth have a voice.

The Rural Community College Initiative to Build New Partnerships in Support of America's Rural Communities

	Short-term changes	Mid-term changes	Long-term changes
Financial capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local people making money at the farmers' market. • Work with the county on issues related to farmers' market and community. • Got grants. • Youth ownership of business ventures. • Young people have access to scholarships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charter schools benefit from youth interest in culture. • Less drugs mean less dollars for social services which is better for taxpayers. • Young people begin selling their products and can sell free at the farmers' market. • Community leaders increase access to resources. • More grant funding. • Buyers and sellers have access to many products. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers' market develops non-profit status. • Working toward a new economy for the area. • See themselves as part of the global economy.
Built capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop environmentally friendly structures. 		

Mesalands Community College

Located in Tucumcari, New Mexico, Mesalands Community College serves a large, sparsely populated area that is experiencing population decline, high unemployment, deteriorating housing and real estate stock, and poverty. Once part of the Route 66 tourism route and home to ranchers and farmers, it is remaking itself into an arts, innovation and entrepreneurship Mecca, with the help of the RCCI.

When the RCCI began, lack of community pride and hope resulted in deteriorating landscapes, housing and business districts. Some described it as the “bone yard” of Route 66, with multiple sagging and deserted 50’s style motels along the main street, numerous junk cars abandoned in empty weed-grown lots, and coffee shop discussions focused on all the reasons why things don’t work. Despite its yawning emptiness, an industrial park built in the 1980’s to attract industries and create jobs was still the main plank of the economic development group before the RCCI community engagement strategy began.

Although the second team leader was new to Tucumcari, he was not new to community development. Seeing the need to help people reframe the challenges and opportunities available to them, he began the RCCI project by introducing study circles focused on sustainable growth. In these circles he discovered that local agencies and organizations did not work together. The absence of communication had created fertile growing conditions for distrust and discord. By organizing regular networking meetings, he was able to help them develop norms of trust and reciprocity so they could begin working together on

common community issues. He also had opportunity, as director of the Small Business Development Center, to work with existing and aspiring small businesses.

The RCCI work helped him discover a small but vibrant artist community that created a 501(c)(3) and began a program of supporting local artists and the arts, including working with the college to conduct a summer program for young people on making community murals. Their fundraiser selling painted ostrich eggs netted them nearly \$12,000 to begin operations and demonstrated to the communities that the arts can make a difference in Tucumcari’s future. Interest in the arts as an economic engine led to a \$400,000 grant to renovate the old train station into an art incubator and the acceptance of Tucumcari into the state Main Street program.

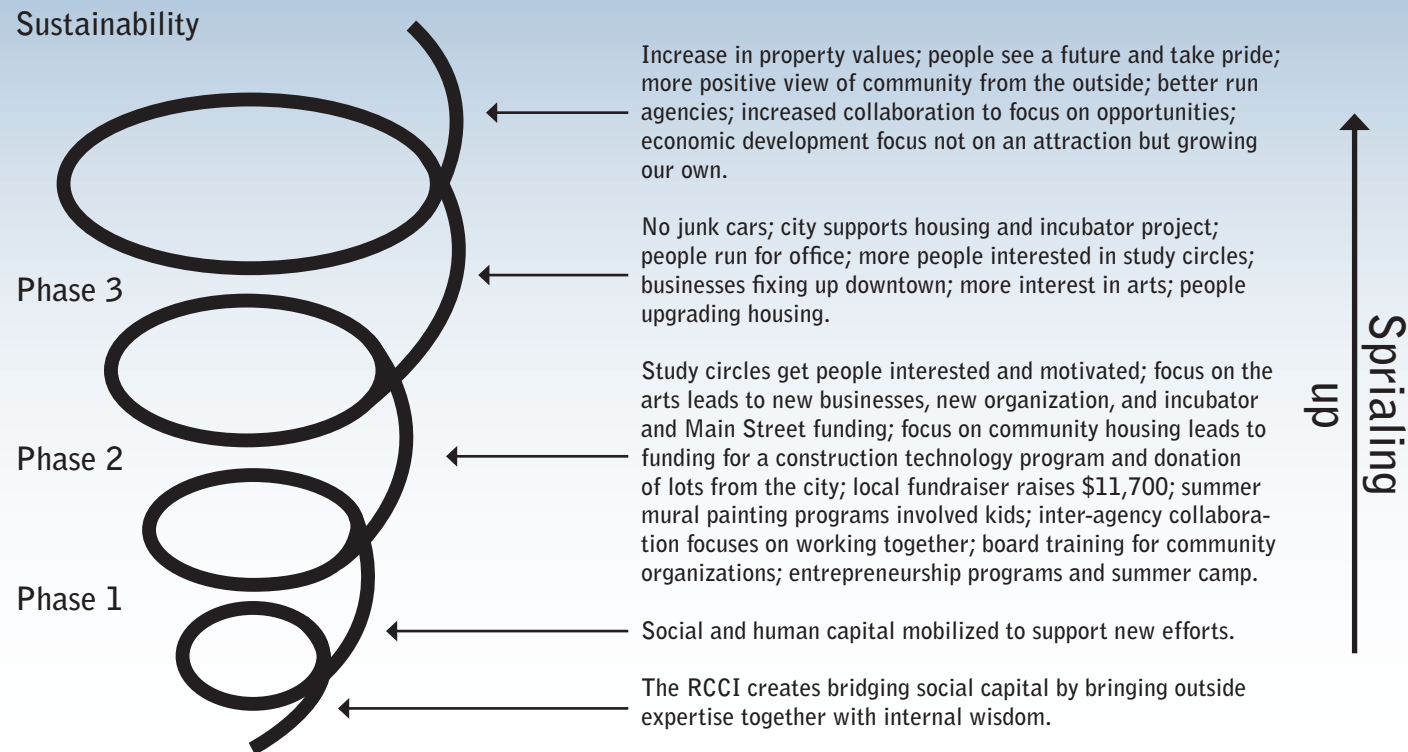
The team leader focused on entrepreneurship and small business development by partnering to offer various workshops around the region. A summer camp on youth entrepreneurship is now in its second season. The college also received a grant to develop a construction trades program to help address the lack of livable housing stock and opportunities for jobs in a nearby resort development. The city donated two abandoned lots to the project, as well, and the college has successfully received funding for a wind energy training venture.

New visions of the future color coffee shop conversations as residents discuss new businesses, changes in the community’s appearance and local murals. People who are now more willing to invest locally include townspeople, businesses, artists and those from outside the community. Young people are seeing a role for themselves in that future.

Reported RCCI Activities

- Study circles
- Arts and economic development
- Construction trades
- Appreciative Inquiry training
- Entrepreneurial approach to housing and day-care
- Summer camp for youth entrepreneurship
- Summer program for making community murals
- Agency networking meetings

Mesalands Community College: Spiraling Up of Community Capital Assets



Mesalands Community College: Community Capitals Impact Map

Most Significant Change: People talking more positively—something good is happening—more open to change.

	Short-term changes	Mid-term changes	Long-term changes
Natural capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nicer yards and home sites. No longer seven junk cars in the neighbor's yard. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More pride in the community
Cultural capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Great Egg-pectations earns \$11,700. Formed E.N. Artspace as 501(c)(3). Agencies focus on what they can do together. Study circles got people aware of social responsibility for making change. Kids work on murals as a summer program. People aren't pointing fingers—more community involvement. Artists are more important—seen as a local asset. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Murals make it more attractive place to live and work. Some owners are moving back. Kids see alternatives—don't mess with the murals! Murals give something to be proud of. Community supports arts events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other communities want to participate in Artspace. Focus on inclusivity within Artspace. More recognition that kids are an asset. More awareness that people can do stuff—we have the answers. People talking more positively—something good is happening. They are more open to change. Growing interest in collaboration.
Human capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City taking an entrepreneurship approach to day-care. Better business plans. Entrepreneurship camp. Young people involved in projects and want more. Develop study circles and people want more (youth, youth and adults, artists). Study circles got people aware of social responsibility for making change. Kids work on murals as a summer program. Community-wide board development program offered. Building trades programs started. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for working families to benefit from local high quality day-care. More students in the college. Potential for more effective boards and better run nonprofits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for skilled workforce to meet demand for new housing at Ute Lake.
Social capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social services group convened to see how programs might help clients. Agencies talking together. Develop study circles and people want more (youth, youth and adults, artists). Study circles got people aware of social responsibility for making change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agencies learn about new programs. Build social capital among agencies to improve outreach to citizenry, provide better referrals and find new resources. Great participation in Main Street project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing interest in collaboration.
Political capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lt. governor came and had a positive experience. City agrees to enforce codes; tickets and fines to enforce codes. Petition drive to save Five Mile Park. More people talking about running for office. Study circles got people aware of social responsibility for making change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City now taking action to improve community. State officials impressed. Residents benefit from change and new blood. Potential for increased property tax. 	

Financial capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Eggs-pectations earns \$11,700. • Transportation grant \$400,000 to remodel training station for an arts incubator. • \$600,000 HUD grant to build houses and develop construction training program. • Tucumari accepted for Main Street project. • Artists open two businesses. • Economic development gave \$5000 to plan for arts incubator. • City offers \$3000 voucher to purchase local housing to truck drivers. • City taking an entrepreneurship approach to day-care. • Better business plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 200 people bought art. • Businesses benefit from improved downtown—improved visibility, sales and more interest in occupying downtown sites. • Artists are selling their pieces. • Artists who opened business sell other artists' work. • Increased property value, better real estate market. • Potential for increased property tax. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic development no longer focuses only on recruitment. • More willingness to invest locally—city, local people and businesses, artists and those from outside the community.
Built capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College gets two lots to build houses on. • Tucumari accepted for Main Street project. • Economic Development purchased housing land to stop slum housing. • Yards cleaned up and bad housing torn down. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are upgrading their housing. • Focus on the importance of housing stock and downtown to recruiting people to come here. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View of community from outside is more positive.

Mid-Plains Community College

Comprised of seven campuses, three main and four extended, Mid-Plains Community College is located in central Nebraska and serves 18 counties, 14 of which have lost population despite having more live births than deaths. In their service area of more than 100 communities, young people leave and do not return, so Mid-Plains began their RCCI project as an outgrowth of an effort to offer entrepreneurship courses for high schools students. They lost their original team leader, and due to health issues did not have access to a coach other than receiving help from the Regional Rural Development Center.

Because the Mid-Plains team was interested in focusing their RCCI efforts on their extended campus sites (Broken Bow, Imperial, Ogallala and Valentine) and wanted to find ways to address declining population in their region, they began the work by receiving basic training in Appreciative Inquiry as a strength-based approach to community and organizational change. Using elements of that approach, they undertook a site visit to interact with Williston State College's RCCI team.

"The Williston trip really opened our eyes," one team member reported.

As a result of the site visit, the RCCI team set up advisory committees in their extended area sites. There is at least one young person on each of the committees which sponsored community meetings to determine services and education and training opportunities that the college could provide to help meet community needs. As a result of what they learned from these meetings, MPCC increased their outreach efforts, particularly to businesses and Chambers of Commerce, and are hiring a vice president for their Center for Enterprise. They will fill

the McCook position with someone who has experience with entrepreneurship.

From the team leader's perspective the most significant change he sees is that more communities, local schools and school counselors are focusing on strategies to keep young people in the region. For example, Ogallala raised \$5,000 in scholarship money to support students who wish to continue their education and stay in the area. Bruce Dowse reported that many people felt the downward spiraling of communities' assets would inevitably lead to their demise. "It's a matter of time—see the clock ticking." Now people are seeing the opportunities to help their community grow. "We are seeing them do things [that] I never thought they would."

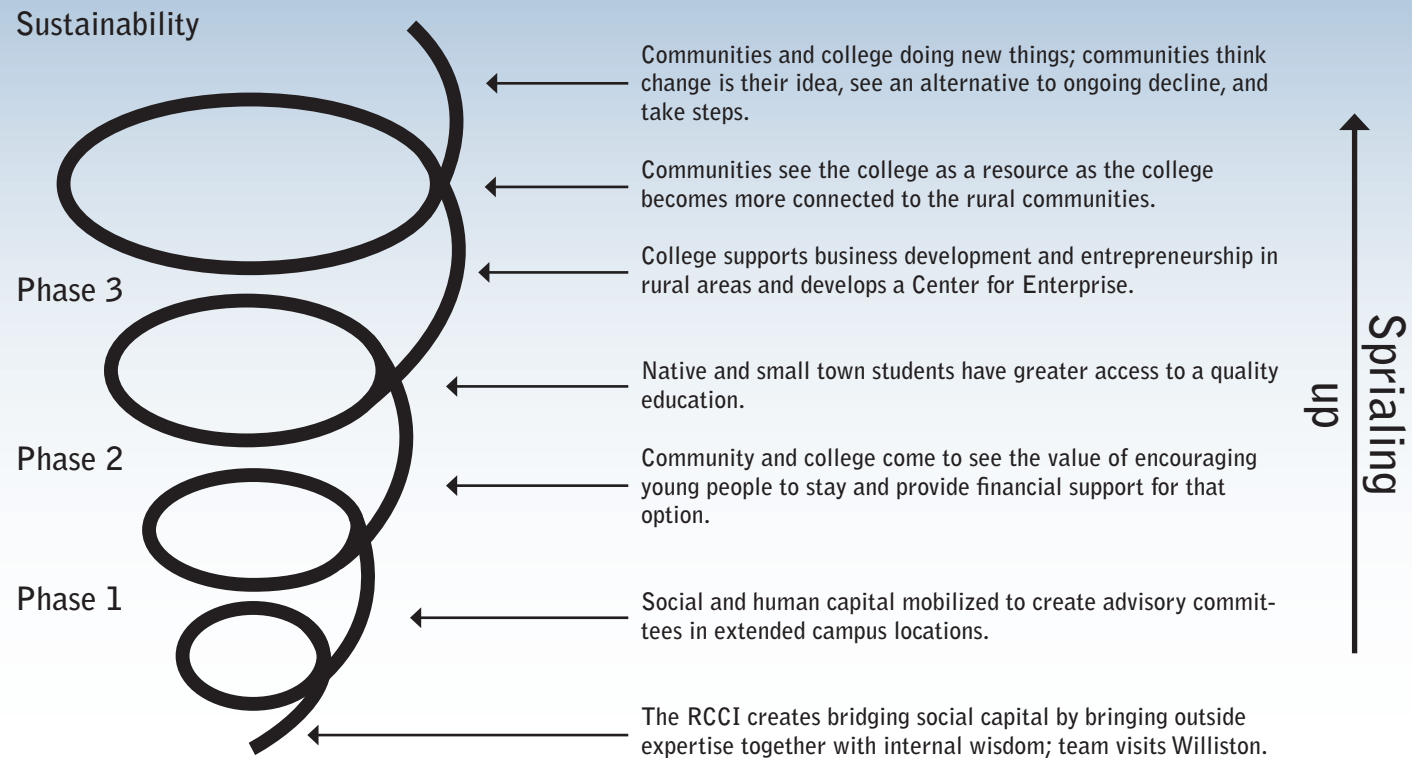
As communities come together, with the help of the college, and find ways to work towards a positive future, they see the activity as *their* idea. They also have a more positive view of the college, which in turn is seeking more opportunities to bring education out to the communities. They want to provide training and education that will support each community's vision of the future. For example, they are moving the Community Action of Nebraska (CAN) program into some high schools so that students can earn credits and have exposure to health careers, thus addressing the lack of trained healthcare professionals in rural Nebraska.

One reason the RCCI project worked so well for Mid-Plains Community College is that it was not a lock-step program that every college followed; rather, the RCCI provided Mid-Plains with an opportunity to design outreach that works well in rural Nebraska and recognizes local expertise and assets. The RCCI has led to the college redefining the context of its work and what is possible.

Reported RCCI Activities

- Advisory groups for extended campuses
- Hiring a vice president for the Center for Enterprise
- Meeting with businesses, chambers, and economic development groups
- Working to provide education on entrepreneurship

Mid-Plains Community College: Spiraling Up of Community Capital Assets



Mid-Plains Community College: Community Capitals Impact Map

Most Significant Change: Communities and the college understanding the importance of providing opportunities for youth to stay or return.

	Short-term changes	Mid-term changes	Long-term changes
Natural capital		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broken Bow gets a land fill. 	
Cultural capital		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College's message is "we can help you help your community to grow." • People understand they can get access to high quality education in their own communities. • Communities believe that change is "their idea." • New mind-set that young people do not have to leave. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities see the college as a partner not as a tax drain—they are more aware of what the college does and what curriculum and programs are available. • Communities know they must improve to keep young people. • Communities see there is an alternative to stagnation. • Community people see young people differently, as assets versus commodities. • College changes its philosophy to focus more on rural communities.
Human capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people participate in advisory committees. • They are moving the CAN program to high schools in some areas. • College will hire a vice president for Center for Enterprise. • Valentine wants a campus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses now have access to training resources. • They can train young people for jobs in rural healthcare settings thus supporting rural communities. • Increased access to education for rural communities and Native students. • Rural areas have better access to education on-line and distant education offerings. • Young people benefit from increased opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for youth help communities see how to address long-term population decline.
Social capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College holds community meetings—in Imperial they have 25 people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities are becoming more organized to support business and education. Ogallala created a business and education committee that meets monthly. • College becomes more connected to rural communities. • More communities getting involved because of college outreach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural communities pulling together. • Chambers are more focused and effective.
Political capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County commissioner sees need and finds funds for tuition assistance. 		
Financial capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ogallala makes \$5000 available for students to stay in the community and continue their studies. • Imperial sets up scholarship programs for kids to stay in the area and continue their education. • County commissioner sees need and finds funds for tuition assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College gets more students and more tuition. • College is working on a pot of money for students to stay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business development helps to create and sustain a diversified economy.

Built capital		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New technology to support distance education alternatives in Valentine.• How will community work help Broken Bow recover from fire—"dagger to the heart of reason to come together."	
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Northeast Higher Education District

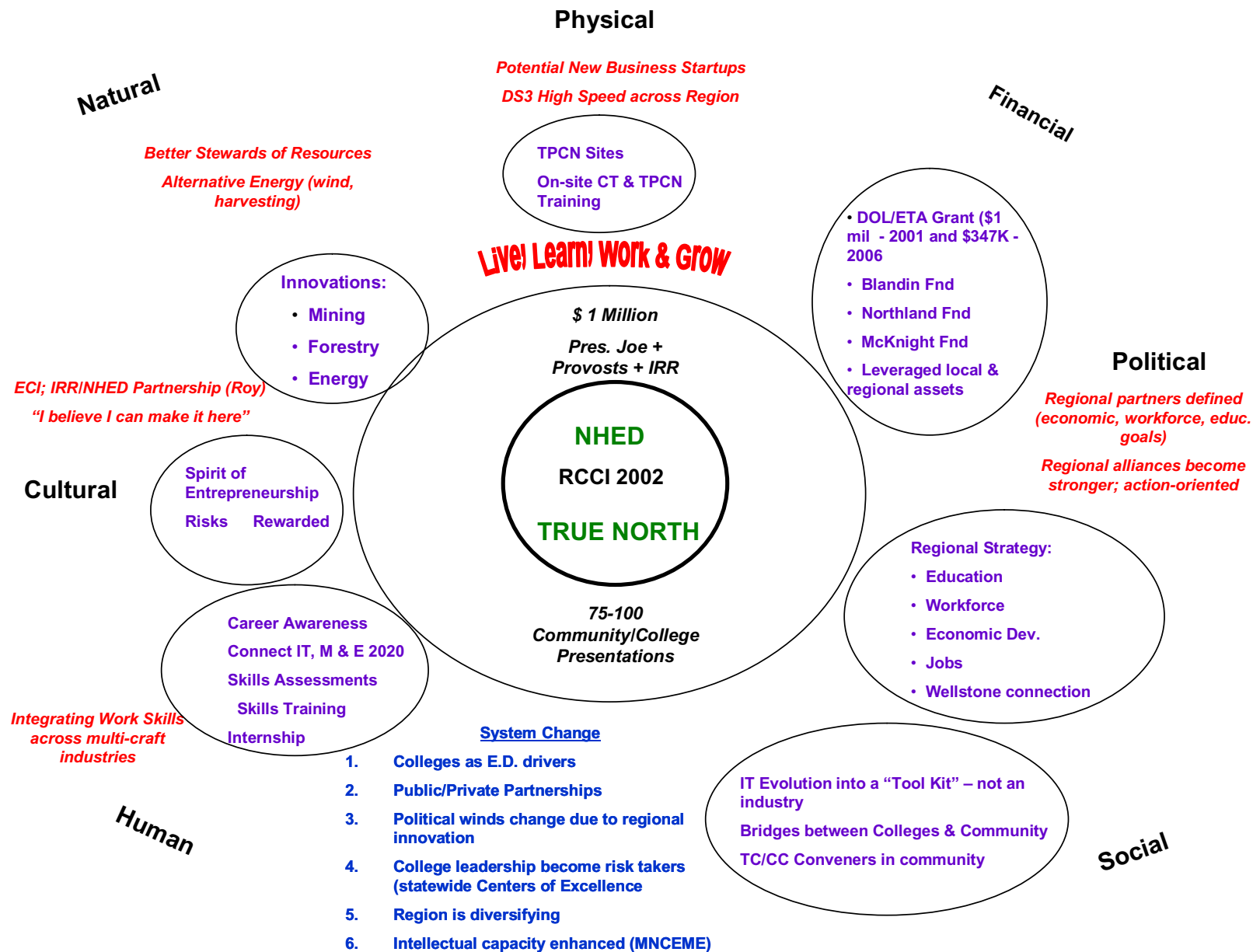
The Northeast Higher Education District had already formed the True North coalition and received funding for technology centers when they joined the RCCI. The District includes five colleges and an additional campus and serves rural northeast Minnesota, an area hard hit by mine and manufacturing closures. Their RCCI project involved developing a regional economic plan and engaging stakeholders to garner support for Truth North. In addition, individual campuses designed and implemented strategies to engage the local community in identifying ways to support local business and job growth. In two locations colleges set up community technology centers in local malls, providing easy public access to business development assistance and workforce training.

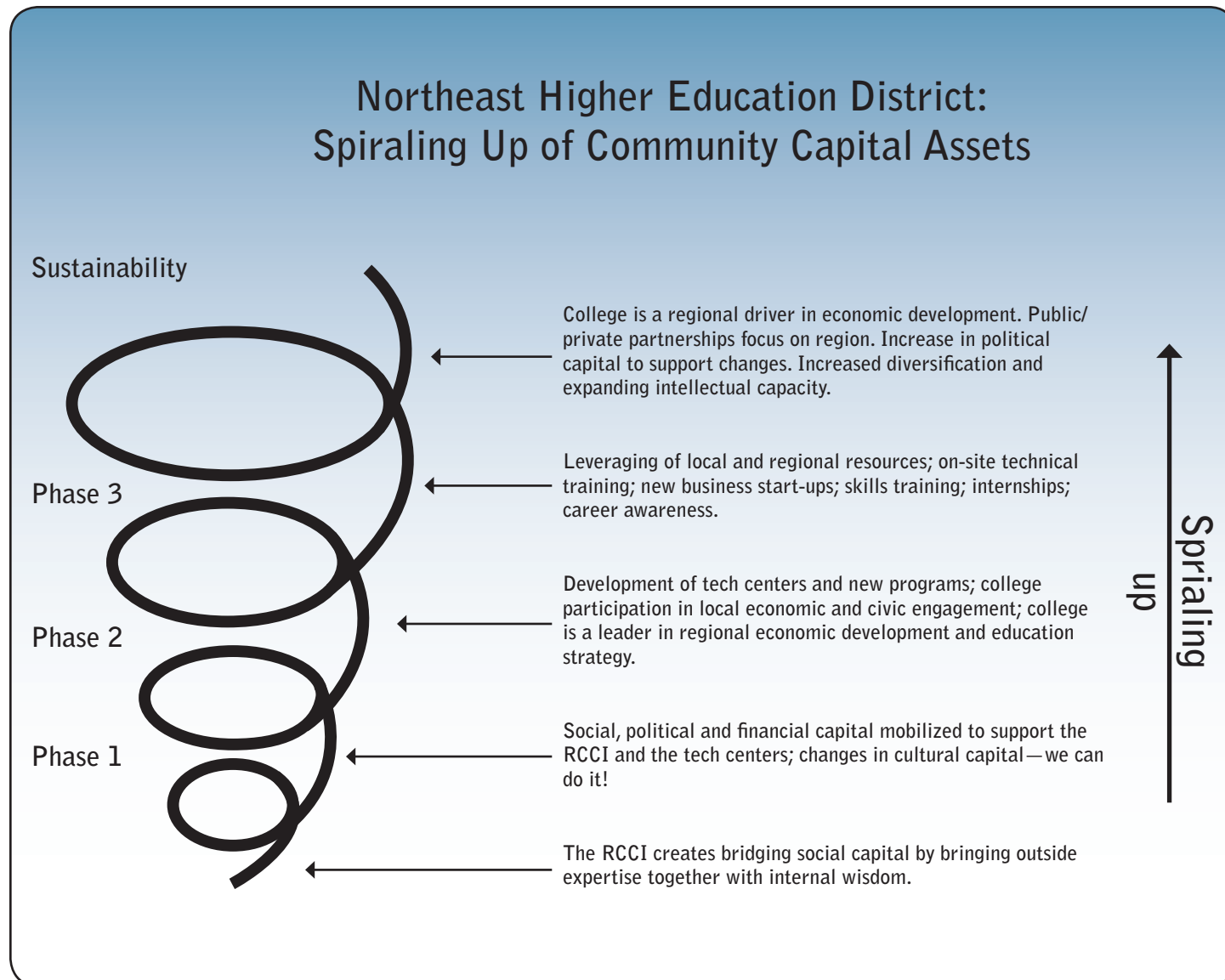
The District encouraged regional foundations and other sources to invest in the True North strategy, focusing on taconite, timber, technology, tourism and telework. In working with these industries and other local and regional businesses, the District has increased career awareness opportunities, skills assessments and skills-related training. They have also boosted educational opportunities in entrepreneurship and small business development.

As a result of this work, the Northeast Higher Education District sees an emerging diversified and sustainable economy with strong partnerships from both the private and public sectors. In forging these partnerships, convening organizations and focusing attention on regional opportunities, the District and its colleges have become both leaders and risk-takers. They produced the diagram on page 53 to illustrate their process.

Reported RCCI Activities:

- Regional strategic planning
- Campus-based outreach
- Tech centers





Northeast Higher Education District: Community Capitals Impact Map

	Short-term changes	Mid-term changes	Long-term changes
Natural capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovations in mining, forestry and energy fields. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better stewards of natural resources. Harvesting of alternative energy—wind. 	
Cultural capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College engages in spirit of entrepreneurship: risk and rewards. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College as economic development driver.
Human capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Career awareness activities. Connect IT, M&E 2020. Skills assessment. Skills training. Internships. On-site CT and TPCN training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More skilled workforce Integrate work skills across multi-craft industries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College leaders become risk-takers (statewide Centers of Excellence). Enhanced intellectual capacity (MNCEME).
Social capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional partners developed related to work-force, education, economic development, jobs and Wellstone connection. Bridging between colleges and communities. TC/CC conveners in communities. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stronger public/private partnerships.
Political capital		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional alliances become stronger and more action oriented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political winds change due to regional innovation.
Financial capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DOL/ETA grant (\$1 million in 2001 and \$347,000 in 2006. Funding from Blandin Foundation, Northland Foundation, McKnight Foundation, additional local and regional assets leveraged. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers find good employees and pay them well. Potential new business start-ups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Region is diversifying.
Built capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TPCN sites. 		

Rochester Community and Technical College

Rochester Community and Technical College (RCTC) applied to be one of the RCCI round one colleges because it wanted to develop strategies to reach out more effectively to rural areas. The initial focus of their outreach effort revolved around business and workforce expansion and retention. RCTC experienced an almost immediate change in their team leader, and due to health issues, their initial coach was replaced by someone with expertise in community vitality.

As a result of the RCCI effort, the college worked with the Workforce Investment Board to create a structure that could address industry sectors, particularly manufacturing and its need for an available and trained workforce. Doing outreach to the businesses and communities has helped the college provide more and better customized training and to link employees with educational opportunities that their employers will support. In response to this outreach, the college has received a number of requests for training in leadership and supervision.

The college has also taken a lead role in developing a working partnership among training and business development providers in their region. While the partnership has room to grow, it has resulted in increased trust among providers, encouraged sharing of curriculum and resources, and developed strategies for each Workforce Development Center's expertise to be available through other providers in the region.

An important result of the outreach effort has been the increased positive interaction between college and community services and the migrant community. Community meetings and focus groups helped support better housing arrangements

for migrant families so they no longer need to live in a car until housing becomes available. Because migrant families are more willing to seek help in the community, the community "no longer sees them just as migrant workers but as members of the community."

Since the interaction with communities and businesses has led to more focus on the nontraditional forms of education, the college is now considering other ways of providing educational opportunities. Existing training programs have also raised the issue of providing college classes to employees so they can be more successful in leadership and supervision roles, particularly when the employer supports employees taking these classes for credit.

Reported RCCI Activities

- Plainview follow-up to identify community priorities and to do focus groups
- Business expansion and retention interviews: Kasson, Plainview, Stewartville, Eyota
- Identification of issues
- Industry cluster, especially manufacturing, on the Workforce Investment Board

Rochester Community and Technical College: Spiraling Up of Community Capital Assets

Sustainability

Phase 3

Phase 2

Phase 1

College experiences success in recruiting diverse students, increased partnering with K-12 and other providers; communities have increased access to educational and business development opportunities.

College develops and offers customized training, increasing workforce skills; college has an opportunity to work with new students.

Community acts on data to address housing and social service issues of migrant workers, increasing their access to assistance.

College collects data for business expansion and retention; college and coach hold focus groups and develop data for communities, increasing human capitals.

Social and political capital mobilized to develop industry sector groups in the Workforce Investment Board and to create a regional partnership of training providers.

The RCCI creates bridging social capital by bringing outside expertise together with internal wisdom.

Spiraling
up

Rochester Community and Technical College: Community Capitals Impact Map

Most Significant Change: Better collaboration between training providers to bring expertise to the employers.

	Short-term changes	Mid-term changes	Long-term changes
Natural capital			
Cultural capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Investment Board understands the importance of manufacturing and other sectors. • Communities see migrants as community members rather than as just migrant workers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community more welcoming of migrants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College experiences increased success in recruiting diverse students.
Human capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colleges submit training proposals to businesses. Employees take classes, particularly in leadership and supervision. • Company works with K-12 and other organizations to do a K-12 career awareness event. • Increased awareness of the college and its resources. • WIB and college offers manufacturing academy for youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry sectors and manufacturing advisory groups have input into the curriculum. • Companies increase training as a result of referrals. • Courses with businesses result in increased opportunities and challenges for the college. • Workers increase awareness of the college and access to education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities have increased access to college and other resources. • Better linkages between college and K-12 curriculum. • Challenges to traditional methods of education. • Recognition that some employees need general education before leadership and supervision courses.
Social capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College submits training proposals to businesses. • Employees take classes, particularly in leadership and supervision. • Company works with K-12 and other organizations to do a K-12 career awareness event. • Industries more aware of the college. • Better collaboration between training providers to bring expertise to the employers. • Increased links to the migrant community for college and communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious groups and federal offices work together. • Increased linkages to and from the migrant community. • Industry sectors and manufacturing advisory groups have input into the curriculum. • Migrant community has more access to services and is willing to seek help. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providers build trust to share more information. • College has improved relations with K-12 particularly in healthcare and manufacturing training. • Increased linkages among businesses and the college. • Increased support for improved access and on-line resources.
Political capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used recommendations from focus groups in town meetings. • Department of Labor amazed at success. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Labor is amazed they can do so much with so little. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New regulations support working together in workforce training.
Financial capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses more likely to seek help; college gets more referrals. • Employers who support training have more loyal employees, less turnover and better skilled workforce. • Training partnership means employers get better value for their dollar. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants and other resources go to industry sectors, for example manufacturing academy. • College gets more students interested in earning credit. • Better use of training resources in the region. • College markets training to companies that offer tuition support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More private dollars into the community.
Built capital		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better housing for migrants. 	

Turtle Mountain Community College

Turtle Mountain Community College serves the most densely populated reservation in North Dakota; it is also one of the youngest. The average age on the reservation is 16.5 years old. In addition to high poverty rates, the area has a very high incidence of diabetes.

In an RCCI planning meeting, TMCC worked with an outside consultant on developing a strategic plan to deal with those challenges. Later, the new college president brought his expertise to the process, resulting in an implementation plan that guided efforts to develop the Anishinabe Wellness Center. In support of that development, the college acquired a number of grants, including funding from USDA and HUD, to link the Wellness Center to sewer and water resources, to build a straw house, to construct an office/classroom building and to create other resources.

The Wellness Center houses the community garden which is managed by students. In addition to the community garden, the land-grant program has tilled garden spaces for community members and provides plants and seeds, along with expertise. The garden at the Senior Center has helped increase intergenerational communication and respect as young people work side-by-side with elders who offer their expertise.

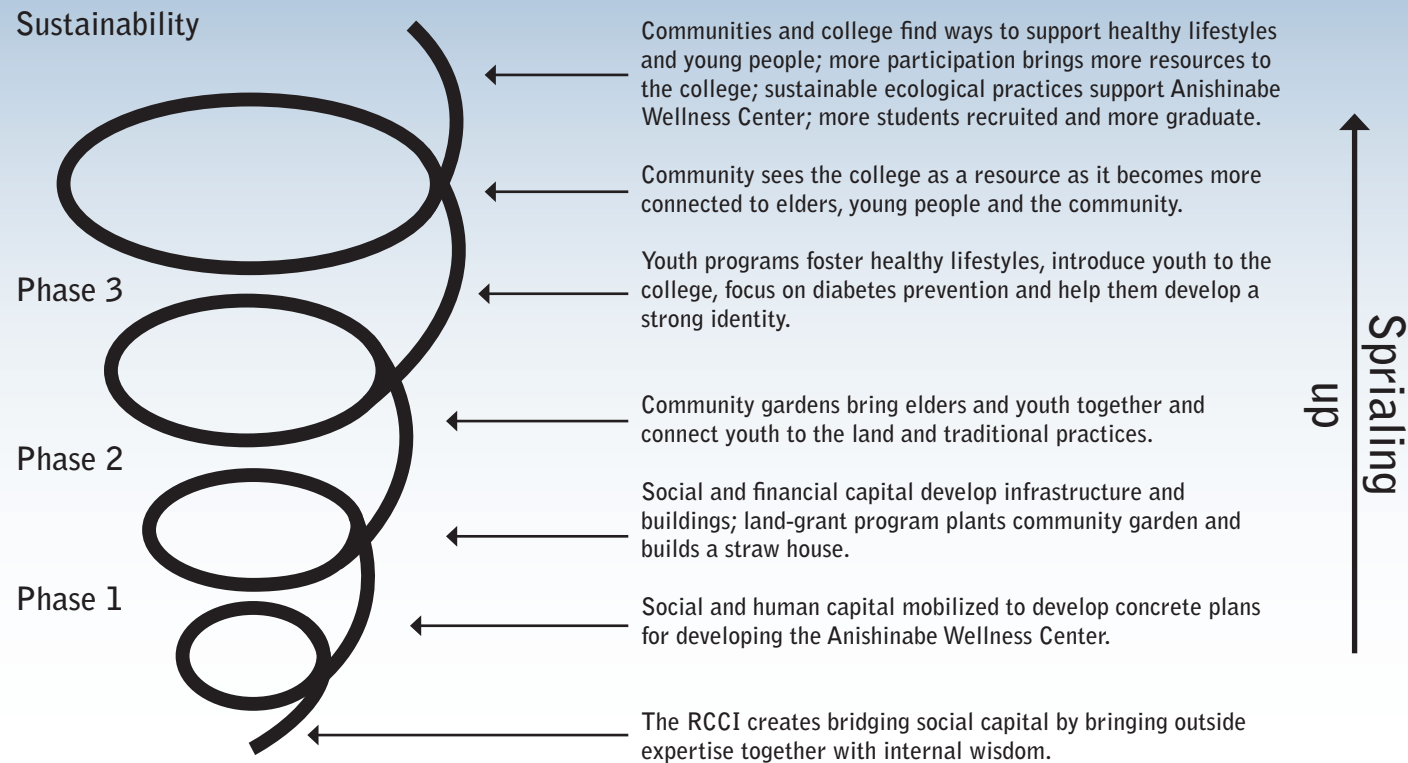
Additional reservation youth programs offered by the Wellness Center include summer sports, working with horses, building a canoe and making snow shoes. The college hopes that by increasing these activities, they will provide youth and their families with opportunities to participate in healthy recreation and learning opportunities. They also plan to develop a trading

post so local artists and crafters can earn additional income from sales.

Reported RCCI Activities

- Strategic planning and follow up

Turtle Mountain Community College: Spiraling Up of Community Capital Assets



Turtle Mountain Community College: Community Capitals Impact Map

Most Significant Change: Created a strong link with the community and provided them with a place to go for healthy, educational, and fun activities.

	Short-term changes	Mid-term changes	Long-term changes
Natural capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care and stewardship of the location. Opportunity to write for and get environmental grants. Youth participate in fishing, boating, horse camps and other activities. Development of senior gardens. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction and use of sustainable ecology practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs will lead to healing the land.
Cultural capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Snow shoe and canoe building classes. Opportunity to teach and use cultural practices of land stewardship. Get people interested in gardening again. Language immersion classes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link people to the land. Activities support local culture and preserve traditions. Anishinabe Wellness Center is a source of pride. 	
Human capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wellness camps. Strategies to address diabetes. Snow shoe and canoe building classes. Youth participate in fishing, boating, horse camps and other activities. Gardening and wellness programs work with youth. College offers a summer youth program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College is adding nursing programs to training people to help with local health issues. Young people have more positive role models. Developing a day-care to help students succeed in college. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tribal members and young people are more health conscious. College is developing recruiting tools related to these activities.
Social capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people working with elders on gardens. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs bring young people on campus, so they are no longer afraid to come. Increase intergenerational communication, contact and respect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College has a stronger connection to young people, elders and everybody.
Political capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tribal support for working with youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The tribe brings leaders and visitors out to the Center to highlight the work the college is doing with the community. 	
Financial capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to write for and get environmental grants. College supports the Center with dollars and staff. College receives over \$1 million in dollars to support Center infrastructure. USDA provides 25% of funding for Center infrastructure and HUD funds come in as well. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs will lead to a future increase in faculty and staff positions.
Built capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connection to water and sewage. Straw house building. New office building. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans to work on a trading post to provide potential income for local crafters and artists. Space for classes and other programs. 	

Williston State College

The town of Williston, North Dakota, is a regional center that is growing rapidly as the boom and bust cycle in energy heats up again. Serving a number of counties in eastern Montana and northwest North Dakota, Williston State College convened a regional planning group to identify assets and to develop plans to support sustainable economic development that builds on local strengths, recognizes the importance of youth in achieving the desired future, and creates on-going partnerships. In addition to fostering a collaborative regional approach to economic development, the college also created new partnerships with K-12 systems and with tribal colleges in their service area. They are currently partnering with Dickinson State University to bring the HomeTown Competitiveness program to the area.

As a result of the RCCI process, the college has a full-time person working with the K-12 systems and workforce development. They developed new programs in truck driving, oil patch training (2,200 people trained in oil field safety procedures), entrepreneurship and value-added agriculture. They have also participated in unmanned vehicle research, supported after-school programs and developed a scholarship program.

Their regional work has catapulted them into the policy arena where they have worked to change policies related to rural development and education. Awarded a Center of Excellence grant from the state, they have procured funding to develop the oil-patch training center and to put up a new building.

These efforts have resulted in a change in people's views about:

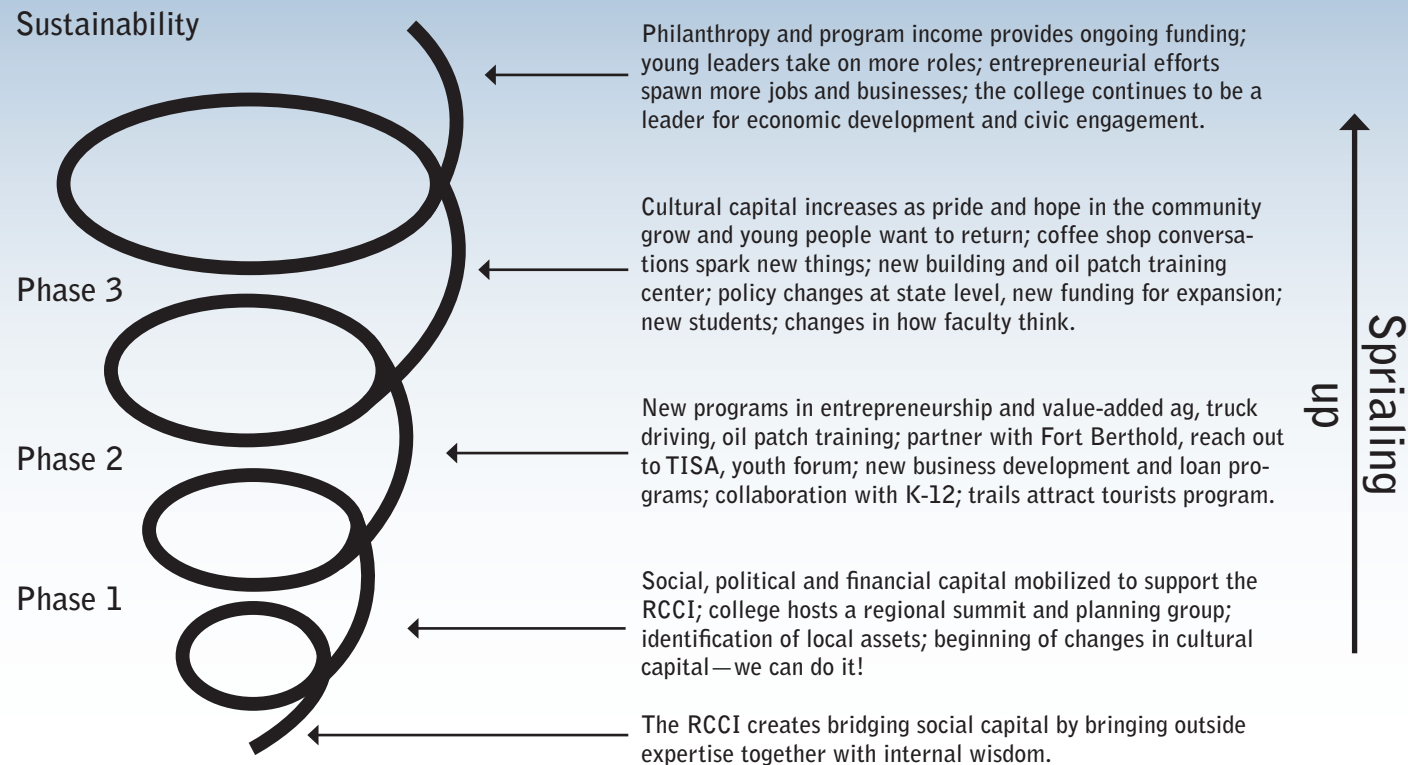
- ***Economic development.*** They now see entrepreneurship and growing their own as key.
- ***Young people as resources.*** Adults now see young people as vital participants in determining and achieving a sustainable future.
- ***Young people's interest in their community.*** Young people are drinking more coffee in coffee houses, gathering to talk about the community and how they can be involved.
- ***Teaching styles and approaches.*** Now teachers focus on interdisciplinary approaches and hands-on learning opportunities.
- ***The future.*** People now focus on "the positive" and poverty reduction opportunities, rather than being deficit-oriented.

Reported RCCI Activities, Successes and Suggestions for the Future

1. College shares employees with school districts
2. Liaison with youth forum
3. Students get more career exploration
 - a. There are more direct services
 - b. There is more buy-in from schools and boards
4. Evening forums get people talking
 - a. Free tuition discussion
 - b. Listening to different people; hearing from different people
5. Realization of the importance of quality of place to quality of life.
 - a. People are not moving just because of a job
 - b. Need to address housing issues

6. Work on legislative issues related to career exploration, housing, rural development, education
7. Grow our own sponsorship program—employers sponsor students
8. Partnership allows us to share resources and improve communication
9. Recreational tourism
 - a. Trail development
10. Increase in workforce training to build program
 - a. One-year credit certificate that will lead to an associates degree
11. Started farm management program
12. Increased revolving loan capacity for micro lending
 - a. Match dollars of \$50,000
13. Accreditation—three projects per year
14. Youth gatherings
 - a. Coffee shops
 - b. College coffee shop
 - c. Mystic blend
 - d. Component of new strategic planning
15. Partnership across educational systems
 - a. 16 schools
 - b. Dual credit courses with college credit
 - c. Scholarships
16. Educational access
 - a. Change educational system
 - b. Increase in healthcare training
 - c. More labs
17. Attracting people back
18. Oil patch training: partnerships with industry, private investment
 - a. 2,200 people trained
19. Truck driver training.
20. Center of Excellence designation and \$400,000
21. Bush grant for entrepreneurship
22. Reach out to New Town
23. Partnership with Dickenson
24. Junior achievement model

Williston State College: Spiraling Up of Community Capital Assets



Williston State College: Community Capitals Impact Map

Most Significant Change: More social input and participation from the masses.

	Short-term changes	Mid-term changes	Long-term changes
Natural capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trails attract tourists. • Better understanding of what they have. 		
Cultural capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better understanding of what they have. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in fine arts. • Young people want to come back. • Change deficit way of thinking. • Coffee shop conversations reflect positive mood. • People thinking poverty reduction. 	
Human capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unmanned vehicle research. • Shifted people to keep partnership going. • Training in energy-related fields for more people. • College hired high schools to teach dual credit courses in high school. • 46% of students in 2005 part-time and 85% using some e-learning. • Increase in average age of students. • More after-school programs. • Credit courses for energy. • Increase in safety training. • Increasing education opportunities. • Increases in workforce training. • Changes in how the faculty members think. • People learning new ways of teaching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More flexibility for learners and teachers at the college. • Fitness center open for walking at the college. • Training in poverty reduction. • Youth start college with up to 45 credits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better family life. • Women and families benefit from addition of two women doctors. • Intergenerational mentoring. • Employers have better employees.
Social capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survival through collaboration. • WSC meets regularly with school boards and district; colleges and schools collaborate. • Forum stimulates communication and cooperation. • Kids drinking more coffee at coffee house. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnering with more organizations. • Web of interdependency among college and schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All agencies benefit from buy-in and support of the regional initiative.
Political capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence legislation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership in Williston brings in young people. • Shift to younger leaders. • New leaders elected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social input and participation from the masses.

Financial capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$700,000 for new building. • More jobs and better jobs as indicated by the want ads. • College paying high school salaries. • Access to CDBG and loans. • Access to RBEG funds for entrepreneurs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships with federal delegation lead to \$200,000. • Families more able to finance college with students earning credits at the high school level. • Increase in average wage. • Partnerships with leaders and other financial resources to increase loan funds for small business. • Transitioning businesses to second stage and to younger owners. • New businesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families more secure. • Impact of oil industry in creating jobs and opportunities. • Private sector business development and investment. • More businesses providing services.
Built capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New building and plan for rural development building. • Use airport near border. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased dorm space. 	

Resources

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